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Nafha and Beer Sheba sisters and mothers at ICRC Jerusalem offices after December 13 sit-in

FAMILIES REPORT SEEING BATONS COVERED IN BLOOD

Guards Beat-Up Beer Sheba Inmates

Several prisoners are known to have been injured in clashes between inmates and guards at Beer Sheba prison December 17. Prisoners' relatives who were visiting the jail at the time were also beaten and were tear-gassed when they tried to hold a demonstration outside the jail.

During a sit-in at Jerusalem International Committee of the Red Cross headquarters after the incident relatives told *Al Fajr* that fights had started inside the jail after guards had insulted a prisoner's family.

Families were let into visiting rooms and told to wait for their relatives. After about half-an-hour's wait the families reported hearing shouts and screams from prisoners and the sound of fighting. They also reported seeing guards carrying batons covered in blood.

Many of the hundred or so women who crowded ICRC headquarters after the incidents said they only discovered the reasons behind the violence later. They believe the clashes started when a guard insulted the family of one of the first prisoners brought up for a visit. The prisoner protested, they say, and he was dragged to solitary confinement.

When families started shouting messages to prisoners they too were beaten, some witnesses said, and forced out of the jail. One woman showed reporters bruises on her head caused, she said, by a blow from a guard's baton. Outside the jail approximately 750 relatives chanted support to their relatives. The demonstration was broken up, they said, by 500 bordergurd reinforcements who baton-charged and tear-gassed the crowd.

On seeing their colleague being beaten other prisoners refused to enter the visiting room. Relatives believe the first clashes came after guards tried to force prisoners to go through with the visits.

The women and children at the ICRC office complained they were beaten all over their bodies by the guards and threatened with guns. They reported they would sit-in at the Red Cross until they heard what happened to their relatives.

One young girl whose visit to her brother was thwarted by the clashes told *Al Fajr*, "This is an inhuman thing to do. No country does things like this."

A Red Cross official in Tel Aviv told *Al Fajr* that they had started negotiations with the Israelis. The official would not say whether families' demands to be allowed to see prisoners some time this week would be met.

Women Sit-in To Protest Nafha, Beer Sheba Conditions

Over 30 women, sisters and mothers of the Palestinian detainees in Nafha and Beer Sheba prisons, held a sit-in strike at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross ICRC in Jerusalem, December 13, protesting the increasingly bad conditions in Israeli jails.

The women demanded improvement in quality and quantity of food, enlarging the shelter for the visitors, widening of cell windows, allowing entry of books and newspapers to prison wards, extending the time of outside recreation, providing the prisoners with necessary winter clothes and beds, changing at least half of the solid metal cell doors into bars, allowing medication and appointing a permanent physician for Nafha jail.

Lewis Kryst, ICRC delegate, told *Al Fajr* that it is not their policy to report publicly about the conditions of the prison but what they can do is communicate the demands of the relatives to the Israeli authorities.

Um Ali, 58, whose son Ali Jaddeh, 32, has spent 15 years of his 20 year sentence in Ramleh and Nafha prisons, told *Al Fajr* that Ali suffers from leg sores and migraines.

Um Nasri, 60, mother of Muhammad Abed Salem Rabi' who is serving a 25-year term, told *Al Fajr* that her son suffers from rheumatism and ulcers. Um Nasri added that her eight-room house in Artas, near Bethlehem was demolished eight years ago by Israeli authorities and her family now lives in a small rented house.

The mother of Ya'coub Odeh, who is sentenced to life, asked ICRC officials if they could bear to work in a cold office. The ICRC officials' usual answer was reiterated: "We will carry your complaints and demands to the prison authorities."

Nafha Prisoners Deny Israeli Claims of Improvements

Palestinian prisoners in Nafha denied December 11 the claims of Israeli prison inspector, Mordechai Dortheimer, who told Israeli newspapers December 6 that the conditions of Arabs in the high security Nafha desert jail had been improved. The changes were said to include new beds, improving the quality and the quantity of food and granting the prisoners radios and all local newspapers. Palestinian prisoners told visitors during the last family visit that none of these improvements had been seen.

Sixteen prisoners received no food December 9 and other prisoners shared the already small amount of food among them. Instead of receiving an additional two blankest for winter, prisoners were forced to return two blankets this season.

After the family visit, a delegation representing the visitors gave news to local journalists about the prisoners status but all articles were censored from the newspapers. Mohammad Wa'ari, whose brother is serving a 9-year term, told *Al Fajr*, "It is a shameful lie that was reported in the Israeli newspapers. None of the Nafha prisoners' demands have been met until now." Prisoners in Nafha held a hunger strike for 48 day in July 1980, demanding improvement in their conditio Two prisoners, Rasem Halav and Ali Ja'fari, died from fe feeding by Israeli prison gu during the strike.

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Collective Punishment

Military Demolish Five Gaza Strip Homes

". . . Destruction (by the Israeli military authorities of Palestinian homes in the occupied territories) would be a technical violation of some Convention, . . . it is (only) monetary punishment . . . In terms of human values, it is better to destroy somebody's house than to destroy somebody's person; it is better to destroy his house than to detain him . . ."

Professor Alan Dershowitz
Tel Aviv University law faculty
From: 'Symposium on Human Rights', 1971

The Israeli authorities destroyed five homes in the Gaza Strip during the last two months. Military forces bulldozed the Nabahin and Musleh family homes in Bureij camp on December 2 and those of al-Ajoureh, Abu Habal and al-Bor'ai in Jabalia on October 24. A total of 25 rooms housing 44 people were demolished.

Collective punishment in response to alleged acts of individual anti-occupation resistance clearly violates Article 33 and 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which state:

> No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited . . . Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited. (Article 33).

> Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organisations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations. (Article 53).

"Better to Destroy Someone's House Than to Detain Him . . ."

The authorities gave the families no specific reason for demolishing their homes but four of five have had family members arrested and detained in Gaza prison for two-three months. None of the detainees have yet been brought to trial. A son of the fifth family, al-Ajoureh — Akram, a university student in Egypt — was accused by another person of anti-occupation resistance. He has neither entered Gaza Strip nor visited his family in Jabalia camp for four years.

"Better . . . Than To Destroy Somebody's Person"

The families tell stories of how the arrests and subsequent housing destructions have traumatised them. Each emphasises a different problem:

Yusra al-Bor'ai, arrested with her husband, Ahmad, and sons, Muhammad and Ibrahim, was released without charge after 105 days in Gaza prison. She returned home to find her newly-built house in rubble. Although she suffers from diabetes and a uterine disease, she was not allowed to see a doctor during the 27 days she was kept in solitary confinement. Now, with her poor health made worse by prison conditions, she and her family must face the hard winter ahead in a flimsy tent provided by the Red Cross. By Israeli military order, families are not allowed to rebuild their homes on the same sites as the destroyed houses.

* * * * *

For Deeba Nabahin, a widowed mother of five, residing in Bureij camp, it is the third time Israeli soldier have destroyed her family house. She lost her first house in Beer Sheba during the war in 1948 and the second during the 1956 Israeli campaign in Sinai, when her house was dynamited along with several others in Bureij.

* * * * *

After her sons Hassan and Jamal were arrested and her house in Jabalia camp destroyed, Um Hassan Abu Habal developed a neurologically-related skin disorder, and has undergone several weeks treatment in hospital.

* * * * *

Muhammad al-Ajoureh, 84, was home with his wife when the Israeli bulldozers came without warning at 11 pm, October 24. Within 15 minutes, they were thrown out of their four room house and it was pulverized into piles of crushed cement in front of their eyes. Kitchen appliances, mattresses and most of their wordly possessions became twisted metal, splintered glass and split wood. Neighbours who tried to dart out at night to help were turned back by Israeli soldiers who had ordered a curfew on the surrounding area.

"Only Monetary Punishment"

The financial burden on the five families is enormous. For most, their sole breadwinners are in prison. There is no money to rebuild houses built after years of saving from their sons' labour at Israeli construction sites. Hassan Abu Habal, 26, a carpenter, was the sole supporter for his eight brothers and sisters, his own wife and five young children. When he and his younger brother Jamal, 24, were arrested, the authorities also confiscated his old jeep, which he needed for his woodworking business.

The al-Bor'ai family, originally from Dimra (just north of the present-day border between Israel and Gaza), lived in UNRWA housing in Bureij camp until two years ago when they had finally saved enough money to build their own house on private land in Jabalia village. Their investment of 11,000 hard-earned Jordan dinars is now an empty lot covered in debris.

None of the members of the five homeless families describe their problems with reference to their legal rights or in terms of financial or material compensation. They address the issue in terms of human values alone. The elderly Muhammad al-Ajoureh comments: "In Israel the government gives old people pensions; is this what they give elderly Palestinians?"

Yusra al-Bor'ai, searching for unbroken glasses in which to serve her guests tea, asks: "Why did they destroy this house? It didn't beat them. It's just the place I sat and sewed."

TULKARM AREA HOME DEMOLISHED

ISRAELI HIGH COURT REJECTS PETITION TO HALT HOUSE DEMOLITION

The Israeli military authorities demolished a house belonging to Ali Hamdan Musleh from Zawiyeh village in the Tulkarm area December 6 and sealed off a second house, also owned by Hamdan, on the pretext that the occupants had carried out military operations.

Reports from the village said that a large Israeli force occupied the village, imposed a curfew and then carried out the destruction.

The houses had been rented to Othman Ali Hamdan and his seven-member family by his father. The second house, which was cemented shut, was occupied by Ali Hamdan and the rest of his family. The Israeli action leaves 18 people homeless.

Musleh published a statement in *Al Quds* Arabic daily December 7 in which he said that he was forced to sign two documents on the day the Israelis demolished his house. After signing he was released, and the house torn down. Musleh stressed in the announcement that he did not know the contents of the two papers.

For more than one month and a half, Ali Hamdan tried unsuccessfully to prevent the demolition of his house. After his two sons, Othman, 30, and Omar, 26, were arrested October 15, Ali Hamdan petitioned the Israeli High Court in an attempt to get an order *nisi* preventing the Israeli authorities from taking any punitive measure before the court heard his case.

The court did not issue the order immediately, as is usually the case, and then finally rejected the petition November 24 ruling that house demolition is within the authority of the military commander of the central region. The court also obliged the houseowner to pay IS5,000 to the state attorney to "cover court expenses." Lawyer Abed Asali, representing Ali Hamdan, told *Al Fajr* that it was the first time that a high court petitioner ordered to pay the state attorney's expenses.

FOUR TIMES IN FOUR YEARS

Authorities Close UNRWA Women Teachers Training Center

While not attracting the glamour and attention of the West Bank universities, the smaller vocational and teachers training centres suffer much the same problems. Closures, the arrest of students and attacks by the military, are not the exclusive punishment of the four-year institutions. UNRWA's Tireh Training Centre for women teachers, for instance, is now in its fourth closure in as many years.

This latest closure was on November 29, International Day of Solidarity With the Palestinian people. Scores of Israeli soldiers broke into the women's college and conducted room-to-room searches. The administration was handed an order from the military governor informing them the college was closed. Officers in charge of the raid said students had staged a demonstration in the street next to the college.

According to a member of the administration who asked not to have her name published, "the provocative search" lasted from 2:00 — 5:00 pm. Like the students, she is somewhat mystified about the reason. "Their pretext — that the students demonstrated — is groundless," she said.

As well as learning to teach, the 600 women students also learn about the process of detention. Hundreds of arrests, mostly of those from Gaza, of Tireh students have been made in the course of the closures. Heavy fines on alleged demonstrators add to tuition fees.

In March 1979, the college suffered the harshest closure — six months. Several young women were arrested and fined. In December 1981, another closure was executed with unprecedented violence. Following a student demonstration, Israeli troops entered the college. Soldiers chased the students into the building after peppering the area with tear gas shells. Soldiers rounded up students at various points on the 70-dunum campus and "beat them up harshly and brutally using batons," remembers one school administrator. Over 280 students were packed into buses and taken to the Ramallah military government headquarters. They left behind them a thoroughly vandalised campus: broken doors and windows and 600 overturned trays of food. Twenty-nine students were tried and nine of them were fined IS5000 each.

In addition to the financial expense, closures and repeated trials have a major cost in academic terms. Artist Suleiman Mansour, a teacher in the college, told *Al Fajr* that the loss of teaching days have to be made up by the teachers, increasing their already heavy schedules.

Students face the problem of being forced to absorb material at an intensified rate. According to one of the administrators, the college still suffers from the effects of the very first closure, because of the enforced postponement of the academic year. Besides this, she added, whenever closure orders are issued, the administration must evacuate the dormitories and bring buses to move the students immediately away from the college. Half of Tireh's students are from the Gaza Strip.

"I believe that if the Israeli soldiers did not interfere, nothing bad would happen," she said. She believes that the Israelis are aware of this fact but "they want to smash any manifestation of nationalism and opposition to occupation."

Regarding UNRWA's reaction to the closure measures, an official of the public information office told *Al Fajr* that the UNRWA administration usually makes an official protest to the military government in such cases. Besides this, the official said, UNRWA demands compensation from the Israeli authorities for any damage caused by the Israeli occupation forces. "But compensation has never been paid," he added.

LAND CONFISCATION

Deir Istia Man Fights Land Grab in High Court

The Israeli High Court issued an order *nisi* December 7 forcing the Israeli military authorities to explain, within 20 days, the reasons for confiscating a plot of land belonging to Saif Abd al-Rahman Bahloul from Deir Istia, southeast of Qalqilia. The land grab order, issued by the Israeli military authorities in June 1982, followed an unsuccessful attempt by a local land dealer to sell the land to settlers.

According to lawyer Felicia Langer who represents the landowner, the Israeli attorney general has tried "to distort information before the court," by claiming that the maps presented by the landowner were not accurate. In court Langer accused the state's attorney of trying to delay the case until the settlers "completely change the land feature and create new realities on it."

The land in question is now being leveled by Emanuel settlement bulldozers in preparation for a road to the settlement. Dozens of olive trees have been uprooted in the course of road works.

The land in question was first sold by a local resident, a well-known land dealer, to two Israeli companies which are working on building the settlement. The land dealer used forged documents to verify the sale. The actual landowner, when he learned of the sale, took his case to Nablus district court, where he proved that the deal was illegal, on November 16, 1982. The Nablus area district court ruled in his favour and cancelled the sale.

Shortly after that, the Israeli military governor of the West Bank issued an order confiscating the land plot "for public purposes."

During her plea in the Israeli High Court, Felicia Langer argued that the confiscation order, "contradicts the essence of the Jordanian laws for confiscating land for public purposes." She explained that the land grab in this case is specifically for the interest of Jewish settlers.

On December 12, the Israeli attorney general approached Felicia Langer and asked her to go to the site in order to settle the case. They are scheduled to visit the plot on December 21. Langer says that the Israeli attorney general took his step to approach her to settle the case out of court after he realized that he was losing the case.

JENIN AGRICULTURAL MARKED FOR LAND-GRAB

The Israeli military authorities ordered the confiscation of nearly 2000 dunums of agricultural land from the villages of Zabadieh, Tiffit and Raba, south of Jenin December 9. The landowners immediately appointed a lawyer to fight the case in the court.

The land-grabbing order was sent to the three villages nearly 10 days ago. The mukhtars of the three villages told the residents that the Israeli authorities intend to confiscate a four-kilometer-long span of land stretching between the three.

The official confiscation order was outlined to the landowners December 9 when the Israeli military Custodian of Absentee Property summoned some of them to his office at the military governorate in Jenin. The mukhtar of Zababdeh told *Al Fajr* that the Israeli officer informed them that the land confiscation was motivated by "security." He refused, however, to specify what the security purposes were, the mukhtar reported, and also offered to rent the land from its owners. When they refused, the custodian banned its owners from planting or cultivating the area.

The seized land is a fertile plain, planted with wheat, lentils and onions. It constitutes a major source of income for more than 60 families. Villagers, noting the recent reports that Israel has plans to build 35 new settlements in the occupied territories, fear their land may be the site of one of them.

According to *Haaretz*, December 8, 22 out of the 35 planned settlements will be located in the northern section of the West Bank.

The landowners appointed attorney Felicia Langer to present a petition, on their behalf, to the Israeli High Court, for an interim order to prevent any possible work which could change the features of the land.

Langer, who agrees with the theories about the settlements, told *Al Fajr* that the landowners possess land registration documents and that she will present their appeal next week.

Authorities Order Confiscation of House Covering Mosaic Floor

The Israeli military authorities ordered the confiscation November 26 of a 1.3 dunum plot in the Jericho area on which a two-storey house stands. The land grab order, which was issued under an order "transferring property for public purposes," gives the Israelis control of an ancient mosaic floor in the house. The mosaic uncovered in the 40s, had been maintained by successive Palestinian owners with permission from the British, Jordanian and, most recently, the Israeli authorities.

Muhammad Husni Shahwan, a co-owner of the land, told *Al Fajr* that they had contacts with the Israeli military governor of Jericho about maintenance of the site as recently as nine months ago. "They told us to change the doors, expand the parking lot, and fix the mosaic floor so that not a single piece would be lost. And we did all that," said Muhammad Shahwan. The landowners, who live on the second floor of the building during the winter, employed a special manager to maintain the site year-round.

The mosaic floor which includes Hebrew words and symbols, was excavated in 1936 by the land's original owner, Yusef Nassar. He informed the British mandate authorities of his discovery and completed clearing the well-preserved floor. The authorities informed the local department of archeology that if they want to take the mosaic floor to a museum, they should do so, within a six-month period. It expired, and Yusef Nassar acquired a permit to construct a house over the floor.

Muhammad Shahwan still has the mandate authorities' permit for the building. Nassar was also given permission to charge an entry-fee for any one wishing to visit the site.

The land and the house were later sold to Husni Mustafa Shahwan, who officially registered it in 1947. In 1956 the landowner acquired a land registration document in compliance with Jordanian law.

The present owners say that Israeli authorities only issued maintenance instructions, which were complied with, but did not show any other interest until the grab-order last week. Shahwan is taking legal advice and will appeal the confiscation.

In a letter, the landowners informed Jericho municipality of the land grab, and asked them to take control of the land in order to prevent the Israelis from taking it. The municipality did not reply. Jamil Sabri Khalaf, appointed mayor of Jericho, said that the municipality has been contacting the Israeli authorities in order to get them to rescind their decision.

ISRAELI SETTLERS SEIZE OVER 300 DUNUMS

Israeli settlers from Kawkab-Sabah settlement north of Ramallah seized more than 300 dunums of land from Deir Jrir December 9. The landowners made an official complaint to the Israeli military governorate at Beit El. No action, however, was taken by the Israeli authorities to stop the seizure. The land is owned by 40 families, who totally or partially depend on its revenues.

The land grab was carried out in an arbitrary manner, say villagers. Tractors driven by the Israeli settlers merely drove over and began ploughing the land. On hearing the news, Abd al-Fattah Hussein Barakat, the mukhtar of the village, along with several other villagers, went to the threatened area. The settlers continued working and prevented them from entering the land. The settlers reportedly told the mukhtar's party that they were working the property.

The mukhtar then went to the Israeli military headquarters in Beit El, and made an official complaint against the Israeli settlers' action.

On December 13, an Israeli officer came to the village, on a previously arranged visit, and went along with the village mukhtar to the land. Settlers vacated the site during the visit, but returned after he left and resumed work.

The Israeli officer promised to "study the case, and give his answer later," villagers said. The village residents fear that by the time the Israeli military authorities decide to take any action the land would be lost. They have appointed Elias Khoury to take their case to court. An earlier attempt by the settlers to seize the land was aborted after the landowners mobilized pressure on the Israeli authorities to take action. The settlers finally were forced to give up their attempts and the landowners were able to plant their land.

Kawkab-Sabah settlement was established in 1980 on a 2000 dunum land plot seized from the villages of Deir Jrir and Kufr Malek. The land was first seized in 1975 for "military purpose" and a military camp was erected on it.

The Deir Jrir mukhtar told *Al Fajr* that out of the 33,000 dunums of village land, more than 22,000 dunums have been either confiscated or closed and made off-limits to its owners. The villagers are refusing compensation. "Taking compensation is like selling the land," the mukhtar of Deir Jrir contended.

RESIDENTS VOW TO DEFEND THEIR 20,000 DUNUMS

Over 20,000 dunums of land extending from the eastern Sawahra area and Mukabber mountains to the Dead Sea is facing the threat of official confiscation.

Ali Ayad, mukhtar of Sawahra was summoned November 17 to the military headquarters in Bethlehem and given a paper in which he was told that Jinjit and Muntar areas were confiscated. Ayad was then accompanied by several Israeli officials from Beit El to Sawahra and they pointed out the rough area which will be grabbed. Ayad was told to inform the owners of the land of the confiscation without getting an official written order.

Before the 1967 occupation the 12 Sawahra Beduin clans, numbering 10,000 people, grazed their flocks in the area and grew grain on the plains. After the war of 1967, they were prevented from entering or using the land under the pretext that it is a military region.

Lawyer Muhammad Jweisat told *Al Fajr* that the land of Sawahra is officially confiscated and the owners of land were given 21 days to file a complaint before the military objection's committee. "I appealed to extend the deadline for complaints to three months so that we could gather the necessary documents (Tabu)," Iweisat said.

On November 30, residents of Sawahra held a meeting in the village and decided to form two committees: a legal committee and a consultative committee. The legal committee of three lawyers, Ali Shqoirat, Hussein Ibeidat and Muhammad Iweisat is to pursue the case in court. The consultative committee, of nine heads of the clans in Sawahra, is to prepare the documents regarding ownership of the land. Qassem Sarakhi, one member of the consultative committee told *Al Fajr* that residents of Sawahra "insist on using all legal means to defend the land."

THE DAWN

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THE SHADOW OF SECURITY

Almost fifty percent of the original material prepared for our pages in the year 1982 was totally wiped out; some 25 percent was passed through a sensitive filter that resulted in it being either mutilated – rendered meaningless or contrary to the original idea – or without the most important parts of it.

The fight to bring out *Al Fajr* is a week-to-week, day-to-day struggle. Only looking back at the past year, as one does at this time of year, does the full picture emerge – either then, or when the censorship file is so fat it falls off the shelf. Of course the Israeli military officers who execute the cuts know their stuff. You don't get to be an expert in "security" without some skills.

Down the hill from the military censorship base, all we want to know about security excesses is: how many articles dead? how many wounded – and how seriously? Security is not easy to understand . . . we're still puzzling here over an event that occurred mid-summer. The censor lost 16 of our articles and we sent them in a second time. Thirty-two came back . . . and guess what . . . all of them were censored differently! In the 24 hours between readings, the security situation had changed so radically that suddenly articles about a conference in Nablus, or another in the US could be mentioned; the fact that opposition to the first stage of the invasion was "stiff" could be told and most interestingly two dismissed mayors suddenly lost their titles! . . . for security reasons of course.

We're still wondering what security means down here. We know that sometimes it means 85 percent censorship, sometimes 15. But whether it's meteorological or astrological considerations that effect percentage, we still haven't worked it out.

As Palestinian journalists, getting through the security mire and bringing out our paper each week is central to our part in a much wider struggle. We hope our readers can use the information that's been security-sanitised and put it to use. No one is going to don a dinner jacket and come down to East Jerusalem to hand out plaudits and prizes – we don't expect it. Our reward is that at least some of our words are heard, albeit muffled by the censor's gag. We trust they can be put to good use in the places where the shadow of security doesn't fall.

The Dawn

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Jubran Shaqour:

Galilee Palestinian Activist Faces Third Trial In Five Months

At 12:00 pm, December 12, tense and nervous and surrounded by a number of friends and relatives including witnesses in the hall of Acre magistrate court, Jubran Shaqour, a Palestinian from the Galilee, was still waiting for his trial, for allegedly violating a town arrest order. The trial had been scheduled to begin two and half hours earlier.

Jubran, 30-years-old, calm by nature, was waiting for the third session of the third trial conducted against him on different charges in the last five months.

Two of his witnesses, old men and women who were seated on a bench, were running impatient for being asked to wait so long. They too had shown up in court twice before without completing the presentation of their testimonies in favour of Jubran. Israeli journalists and people from the Peace Now movement attended this session which, however, ended like the previous ones, with no decision. It was postponed for four days. Jubran was pleased that newspaper reporters were present during the hearing. "This is why the judge was kind this time," said Jubran. "He gave me the feeling in the previous sessions, when he was screaming at the lawyer, that he just wanted to take revenge on me."

Jubran, who lives in Sakhnin village with his younger married brother, Suleiman, faces charges of being seen in nearby Arrabeh, thus violating the town arrest order issued against him on October 15. In the last five months Jubran was arrested three times, for different periods of time on different charges. On June 6 he was detained for two weeks and fined IS7500 for allegedly taking part in an illegal political meeting in his village. On September 15 he was again taken by the police and held in jail for 25 days on charges of writing and distributing a leaflet supporting the PLO. The police brought to the court the person who allegedly was given a leaflet by Jubran. The 16-year-old youth was asked by the judge during the hearing to identify the person who gave him the leaflet. He couldn't. "This proved to be a big lie," said Jubran. He added that the police and the Israeli authorities want to create any reason to put him in jail and restrict his movements.

The judge ordered Jubran released on bail of IS100,000. "My brother had to collect the money from friends and relatives," he said.

He quotes statements from the court decision relating to his release which he says shows the treachery of the prosecution and the police.

The statement read: "It is a strange that despite the confession of the 16-year-old boy (Ziad) that he had distributed the leaflet, he is not put on trial." In another place the statement says: "It seems that the head of the interrogation department hinted to Ziad that he was not interested in him and that he suspects Jubran being the one who gave him the leaflets. This is where Ziad picked up the hint."

The acquital of Jubran of this change was not the end. Just three days later, he was placed under town arrest and ordered to report to the nearby police station three times a day. Jubran has also served 18 days in detention, starting October 28, for the alleged violation of his town arrest. He explains that the one who was seen in Arrabeh is his brother and not him. "There are enough witnesses who saw my brother and others who saw and talked to me at my home exactly at the time the police claim I was in Arrabeh."

Why Jubran Is Followed

Jubran Shaqour, an electronics engineer, has been politically active for the last 10 years in different national political bodies and committees. He was one of the founders of the Progressive National Movement in Sakhnin in 1978. In the same year, he was the movement's candidate for the local council. That year the ballot boxes were burned during fights which broke out between disputing families.

Two of Jubran's brothers hold positions within the ranks of the PLO. One of them, Salim (Imad) is PLO chairman Yasir Arafat's consultant on Israeli affairs. The second, Nimr, a military officer. The two crossed the borders in 1969 after constant persecution and harassment by the Israeli authorities. Salim, 40, who completed a degree in political science and sociology in the Hebrew University in 1967, was under town restrictions, and both he and Nimr served three months imprisonment before they left for Lebanon.

Both, Jubran remembers, "were involved in the political struggle against Zionism."

Immediately the authorities learned of their escape. Jubran, his brother Suleiman, and his sister Labeeba were arrested on charges of helping their two brothers, and not informing the police about them. Jubran and Labeeba were sentenced to two months imprisonment and Suleiman served 20 months.

Harassment against them by the Israeli police has not ceased since. From time to time they were summoned for interrogation, which mainly concentrated on routine questions. "What do you do?" "Where do you go?" "Do you have any connections with your brothers?" are standards, says Jubran.

In 1973, Jubran recalls, when the Israelis learned about the crossing of a Palestinian armed cell from Lebanon to Palestine, they imposed a siege around Shaqour's house for three days.

Despite the old and recent harassments, and despite their effects on him and his work, Jubran still firmly sticks to his "political and national duty towards my people." He is fully aware that they practise such a policy against him in order to force him to retreat and give up the path he chose. "Friends and people come to my house to show solidarity," says Jubran. He adds that this popular solidarity, which according to him is a sign of a rising general national and political consciousness, gives him much morale, encouragement and belief in his principles.

Not only Palestinians show solidarity, but even Israelis. The Israeli pilot, who was held by the Palestinians and kept in the house of Jubran's brother, Salim, in Beirut during the Israeli siege of the Lebanese capital, made a visit earlier last month. Jubran couldn't see the pilot because he was detained. But in a telephone call later the pilot, said Jubran, expressed his regret and sorrow for the "harassment against me." Jubran added that the pilot wondered how he was treated very well when he was in the hands of the Palestinians, while, in his words, "You are treated very badly by the Israelis."

OPINION

Film Review: 'Khamsin'

First Israeli Film To Show Racist Policies

The Israeli film, *Khamsin*, is presently on general release in Israel. Like most Israeli films, it is not a major piece of cinematic art, however, it is a milestone — a film showing with courage, for the first time in the history of Israel, the discriminatory and racist policies practised by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian Arabs who live inside Israel. The directness of the language and the explicitness of the characterisation also set it apart from other Israeli movies.

The film opens with an Arab worker, Khaled, cleaning his boss' car windscreen while being told by a friend from his village of the government's intention to confiscate their lands. Khaled, without stopping work, curses the government. He doesn't change his expression.

His boss, Gadalia, is son of a Jewish family living on a settlement established before the foundation of the state of Israel. It is on a site close to an Arab village. In the early part of the film it is clear that Gadalia's family enjoys good relations with Abu Yusuf, a major landowner from the Palestinian village.

Gadalia is in the business of making money. He raises cows and he aspires to increase his herd. His problem is that he does not have enough grazing lands. The early passages of the film deal with his negotiations to buy the land of Abu Yusuf. It is a race against time, as he repeatedly tells his Palestinian friend, because the Israeli authorities are setting themselves up to expropriate the same land. Gadalia is a pragmatist; he tells the family that if they sell they will get the money and he would benefit from the land.

Initially all goes well and the sale looks as if it will go through. The only cloud comes in the form of Ibrahim, Abu Yusuf's youngest son, a radical who opposes the sale and is also engaged in a personal vendetta against the settlement to protest the looming land-grab. He sets fire to a shack and uproots avocado trees from the settlement's orchards. These incidents cause tension and unease between the settlers and the villagers.

The body of the film documents the deterioration in the relationship between the two communities. The settlers take a series of measures against the youths of the village, who work for them, and step up the policy of discrimination against the youths. They prevent them from sleeping at work, and finally launch a bloody attack against them, preventing them from going to the local cinema.

Beneath the main plot a love story develops. Khaled, who works for Gadalia and sleeps in a storehouse belonging to him in the settlement, falls in love with his boss' sister, Hava. This meets with general hostility from the Israelis. The settlers, though unaware of the depth of the relationship, openly oppose the growing relationship between the two. Hava's mother, a frustrated pianist, wants Hava to leave the settlement anyway. When she becomes aware of her daughter's relationship with the Arab employee she becomes almost frantic. Gadalia, himself, who until that point had been the only Israeli to maintain any half-way decent relationship with his Arab neighbours proves to be a person whose friendship is based on self-interest. Earlier he screams at the settlers who accused him of 'loving the Arabs': "I love Arabs? Let me deal with them in my own way — without violence."

Khaled's character is central to the film. He is completely passive in his attitude towards the policy of confiscation and his passivity is confirmed when he, the "moderate" is insulted by the settlement members as he is forced out of the cinema. Khaled's attitude runs counter to that of Ibrahim and other villagers who are determined to defend their legitimate rights to this land. Ibrahim represents the new generation that has taken to resistance to oppression and confiscation of lands. He challenges his father's intention to sell his land to the Zionist settlers. He is not deluded by either Gadalia who use a means of deception and bribery for this purpose.

Khalid, meanwhile, talks of his own interests and lives in fear of losing his job if he chooses the path of confrontation with the settlers who disregard and hate Arabs. Today, Khaled is atypical. It seems that the director has not followed the development of the political and national awareness of the Palestinians. Palestinians today, including workers, are not passive to the humiliation and the insults of their Jewish work owners. They defend their personal and national dignity.

The escalation of the racist policy against the Arabs and the continued takeover of their lands have had a counter-effect on the attitudes of the Palestinians. Abu Yusuf, who maintained a friendship with Gadalia, who, like the Keren Keyemet agents, use money to control Arab land, discovers at the end that there is no room for good relations when the settlers do not distinguish between a person who tends to compromise with them and those who do not. Whether the film director meant this or not, this remains a reality.

The film, while casting some light on one of the sides of discrimination against Arabs, does not give a true picture of the Arabs. It portrays them as they are portrayed in the Zionist news media, either as collaborators with the authorities, selling them land, or as aggressors who attack the settlements and damage the settlers' "property."

At the beginning, Hava fears the hostile atmosphere and tries to avoid the relationship with Khaled. Her fears seem well-founded. When Gadalia sees the couple together, his response is to kill his Arab worker.

Still despite these drawbacks, the racist attitude of the settlers is clearly shown. No Israeli character is not hostile to Arabs, apart from Hava whose stance is unclear. Her love for Khaled was either individual or reflects a non-racist attitude towards Arabs. The story also underlines the escalation of the racist measures and hatred of the settler population. It is perhaps this which turned the moderation of Abu Yusuf into a hardline attitude. The author shows the actions which cause reactions.

It is not clear from the conclusion, whether the film wanted to tell us that co-existence between the two peoples is impossible. But Dani Waxman, the director, who presented Khaled as the person who seeks understanding with Jews, denies this.

In an interview with *Davar*, October 18, Waxman said, "many in the country bury their heads in the sand. They don't know that we are sitting on a barrel of explosives. Time is not on our side, as they would tell us. Peace and quiet cannot be achieved as long as the Arabs in this country live as third class citizens . . . workers and servants without equal opportunities."

In another place Waxman says "we are approaching a Rhodesia or South African (situation) in our treatment of the Arabs. This is the reality. I portray it and am afraid of it. We don't realise the danger coming in the future. I wanted to convey my fears and worry to the consciousness of the people so that we can act. I am afraid, but I am not desperate."

Israeli Authorities and Dudeen Supporters Terrorise Opposing Family Members

To the editor;

I was invited to attend a meeting of the Dudeen *hamula* on May 8, 1982 to discuss serious issues related to the family, principally the fact that some of its members carry arms and have shot at demonstrators. Yousef Mousaa Qazzaz, Abdel Fattah Issa Dudeen and a third, nicknamed "Kurbaj" (whip), were all accused of irresponsible behaviour which provoked the tribe to a clear response.

While we were eating lunch on the day of the gathering, a three-car army unit arrested Mahmoud Taha Dudeen and me. They took us to the military compound and placed us in the Hebron civil administration jail (detainees call it 'Village League prison'). I stayed in this prison for 12 days without formal charge and without anyone asking me a single question. My relative, Mahmoud, was taken to Fara'a detention centre where he spent 17 days.

On May 13 and 19 and on June 4, the Dudeen family published in *Al Fajr* Arabic daily "ostracization" notices against Mustafa Dudeen and anyone of the Dudeen and Darabli' tribes affiliated with the Hebron Village League.

Supporters of Mustafa Dudeen began a campaign visiting those who did not join in the denunciation in the newspapers, threatening them with imprisonment and dismissal from their jobs if they joined those who signed their names. As for the signators, the Dudeen followers told them that the Israeli authorities would fire those whose names appeared, ban them from crossing the bridges and deport those who encouraged them.

To terrorise those who made a public stand against Mustafa Dudeen, the Israeli police summoned 32 people and, without charging them with anything, attempted to pressure them to change their positions.

This stand taken by a number of the Darabli' tribe revealed the closed face of Mustafa Dudeen, whom the authorities have prepared to play the role of the outsider. It also showed that the villagers in the Hebron area do not support him, contrary to the lies of Mustafa Dudeen.

The silent majority, who do not support the Village Leagues but who are at the same time afraid of revenge by the Israeli authorities, were happy at the announcement of Darabli' tribe denouncing Mustafa Dudeen's stand and that of the few armed men he employs as bodyguards in order to terrorise people. The people do not fear this bunch but they are afraid of the repercussions from authorities.

As to the authorities' attempts to entangle the daily life of the people with the Village Leagues, it is obvious that the authorities will only deceive themselves, because they know that the Village Leagues are nothing but a bunch of opportunists who have gone against the will of their people. They do not represent more than 0.2 percent of the villagers, most of whom were collaborating with the Israeli authorities even before the formation of the Leagues.

Ahmed Shaker Dudeen
Dura village

COLLABORATORS IN JAIL
To the editor;

You reported some time ago about Israeli use of collaborators during interrogation. Your readers will know that groups of informers are put in cells to which people under interrogation are led. The collaborators tell the prisoner they are "responsible officers" of one faction or another and demand the "credentials" of the men detainee. If this "con" doesn't work they threaten violence — violence which is dismissed by Israel as "a problem between prisoners."

Today, the authorities are becoming quite open about this fact. On a recent visit to Ramallah military compound I saw six "prisoners" basking in the sun. After a few minutes an Israeli soldier left an office and signalled to the men. They rushed away and hid behind a pile of stones while a prisoner under interrogation — easy to spot from his dishevelled state — was transferred from one cell to another. Then the group returned to sun bathe.

Name and address withheld on request

MUNICIPALITIES UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL

NABLUS: Taxes Up; Services Down

Nabulsis, residents of the largest town on the West Bank, notice two main changes since their mayor was dismissed last March: taxes, electricity and water fees went up, and services virtually halted. At the same time a double stop-gap seems to be taking place. Workers in essential services continue to run their enterprises independently of the military committee appointed by the authorities and locals have established a network of community committees to keep the streets clean and provide basic maintenance.

Bassam Shaka'a was dismissed as mayor by 'civil administrator' Menachem Milson, March 23. Immediately, the municipality's 800 workers struck. Most of them haven't been back to work since. The council, which was not formally dissolved, also quit.

The areas under municipal control which continue to function — the electricity, water and fire departments — have carried on "spontaneously," according to one former councillor. The workers and administrators still show up for work and keep the systems ticking away. Salaries are paid from outside the country.

Consumers, however, notice the change. One of the first acts of the 'new' municipality was to raise the price of power from IS1.8 to IS7.5 per kilowatt. The 25,000 consumers in the city have little choice but to pay. The occupation also ended the fight to build new generators, in its favour. The council had fought through the courts for years to be allowed to import new generators. They finally won permission in 1981. The machines arrived from Germany, however, after Shaka'a's dismissal. Company workers have since heard that the generators were sent back when no one picked them up from Haifa port.

Salah Khowira, head of the local water board, is presently awaiting military trial on charges of not presenting accounts to the municipality.

The new council's taxation department has also been active. They discovered an old tax regulation under which all workers, professionals and business people in the city had to pay a head tax. The previous council had dropped the tax. Not only did the military revive it, they upped it from JD2 to JD20 per annum.

Tax collection is, however, more efficient — it is backed with the power of the military authorities. No Nabulsi can travel, take public examinations or receive official permits unless s/he furnishes proof that her/his family has no debts with the council.

The elected Nablus municipality had prepared 80 dunums to construct an open air theatre, a project for children and public halls. The project was to be set in a park and 15 dunums already prepared by March. The appointed military committee has since given a license to a private constructor to build on the rest.

No new classrooms have been built since March, locals complain. And the work that had been started on 20 new streets was frozen. The administrative engineering local committee which consisted of all members of the municipality and all engineers was dissolved. No repair work has been carried out since.

The old municipality had started building 148 housing units in areas to the west and the east of Nablus in 1981. This was the first stage of a construction project of 30 buildings for low income families.

There are no drains in the west and east sides of the city. The city's waste water runs onto the land of nearby villages. In 1981 the municipality had started work on a sewage scheme by digging drains in these areas. They also bought 80 dunums to set up a sewage plant. This has since been frozen.

A project to construct a garbage incinerator and another to build a modern municipal slaughterhouse have also been stopped.

Some of the old municipal functions are still carried on by volunteers. After the council was removed voluntary work committees sprang up in most of the town's quarters.

Adnan Ali Mifleh, 27, and Zahi al-Shaharouri, 32, are members of work committees in al-Hamra and Six Metre quarters. They told *Al Fajr* about their committees.

Adnan Ali Mifleh: "Three months ago, as our quarter, al-Hamra, was not being cleaned, 15 young men in the quarter decided to do something about it. Every Friday holiday we get together and clean the area of rubbish and domestic waste. One of us is a member of the Higher Community Work Committee that consists of representatives of all streets and quarters.

The committees really came into their own during the recent floods in Nablus. Four weeks ago, the rain to a depth of 1.5 metres swept off the surrounding hills and flooded the houses in the Old City. The community work committees and hundreds of Nablus residents immediately started a campaign to save the homes. Initial work consisted of getting the water out. The floods happened because the municipality had not cleaned or opened the central drains. To prevent a recurrance of the disaster work teams from the voluntary committees did the job for them.

What Next?

As the town's fabric continues to decline through lack of maintenance the long-term is bleak. While the voluntary committees can keep some problems in check, construction — be it of new schools or other facilities — requires permits. These can only be issued by the council.

JENIN: Projects At Standstill

What happens when Milson moves in to a new town? To find out *Al Fajr* went to Jenin to study the implications of the civil administrator's dissolution of the local municipality, July 6, for the local population. The nine members of the municipality, including the Mayor, Ahmad Shawqi were kicked out of office and replaced by four other people, after they refused to cooperate with the civil administration.

The first act of the new council was to sack 52 other municipality employees. They were summoned to the Jenin military government office and dismissed after they refused to cooperate with the new administration. Four municipal clerks were arrested the same day, and the planning inspector was put in detention for "nonpayment of VAT."

Who Are the New Members?

The local population view the four people who agreed to be sit on the appointed committee as traitors and collaborators with the occupation. Shaab Sanouri, head of the committee, they recall, was arrested for rape in 1977, and he was released from detention a few weeks later with no charges. Noting that the new 'mayor' is illiterate and enjoys no respect in the community, one citizen, who refused to be indentified by name, told *Al Fajr*, "Everybody knows Sanouri has been a collaborator since 1977."

Ghalib Khalaf, another committee member, also has a reputation as a long-term collaborator. He is an extremely rich man — a rare thing for a Palestinian under occupation. Councillors noted that Khalaf is the only person in Jenin who has a quarry license.

Majd Abboushi, the third member, left Palestine before to the local police station.

Amin Nasr completely boycotts the new committee, even refusing to go near his municipality office, while the committee holds sway. Three days after the dissolution, the committeee sent him a letter asking him to come and get his final monthly salary. He refused.

Projects Obstructed by Military

Since 1976 the city has been denied permission to bring in money from Amman for a hospital, street improvement, development project for housing, an industrial area and a sewage processing plant. None of the many projects the municipality has completed received 1967 to West Germany — he returned only six months ago and is thus something of an unknown quantity. "He was allowed to return by the Israeli authorities" said Nafa'a," on condition that he wouldn't refuse anything to the occupation." As yet, locals note, Aboushi has not been given a family reunification permit. The fourth committee member, Abdullah Lahlouh, is the head of the Israeli Labour Office in Jenin. "His connection," said Qaddoura Musa, a Jenin-based journalist, "with an Israeli institution, could be one of the reasons behind accepting membership on the appointed committee."

Obstruction of Projects

Since 1979, virtually all municipal projects have been brought to a standstill. Much of obstruction has been petty. The municipality was not allowed to put an electric generator on flow for instance even after permission to purchase had been given and the equipment was paid for.

The municipality was also prevented from digging a water well, and from setting up an industrial project. After several stages had been completed the military stepped in and annexed the area to a no-building zone it threw up in the town. Over the past three years, elected officials note, requests to purchase new garbage trucks, to expand the market, buy land and enlarge the northern entrance of the town, were all turned down.

QALQILYA: Dissolving The Council

The number of dissolved West Bank municipalities rose to nine, July 26, when Qalqilya municipality joined the growing list. The killing of Qalqilya followed the pattern set in previous dissolutions. After demands from Israel's military government the council refused to end suspension of municipal ...es or cooperate with the ... civil administration. Following earlier initia...tives 'civil administrator' and Hebrew University professor, Menahem Milson appointed a four-member committee of discredited local personalities.

On the eve of July 26, Haj Amin Nasr, who was elected in 1976 as mayor of Qalqilya, was summoned to the military government and was given a military order outlawing his municipality. This came just six hours after Nasr had handed in a petition signed by the members of the municipal council, absolutely rejecting any kind of cooperation with the civil administration.

The dissolution order ...es seven days after the ... or was placed under town restriction which forbids him to leave town for six months and orders him to report daily

financial support from the military government although, by law, it should contribute 50 percent of the cost.

The Israeli authorities have held the money which was collected from the population as taxes for the last seven months and consequently the municipality has not initiated any new project, as well as suspending work on a hospital, a new school and a new artesian well.

The Israeli occupation authorities' committee is headed by the director of the Israeli Labour Office based in the city. According to Nasr and others the authoritigs spent 15 days looking for personalities to be in the committee, and that more than 15 who were approached, refused.

The locals have not boycotted the appointed committee and continue to deal with it for essential services such as water and electricity. "We are against and condemn such steps, but we can't boycott because if we don't go and pay the electricity bills they cut off power and water," says Muhammad Shanti, a cement merchant.

The mayor himself does not consider himself deposed. "I was not imposed; I was elected by the people of my city," he remarks. He explained that the Israeli authorities have been trying to remove all national elements who obstruct the "Israeli plans which are rejected by the Palestinian people."

VILLAGE LEAGUE IN ACTION

FOUR HUNDRED ARRESTED:

SA'IR FIGHTS BACK AT LEAGUE LACKEYS

Residents of Sa'ir village, north of Hebron, attacked armed members of the Village League, July 25, after leaguers stopped the village bus and asked passengers for identity cards. At least five villagers and the head of the Village League were injured in the clashes. The five paramilitaries who provoked the bus riders were Sa'ir's new village council recently appointed by the head of the Israeli civilian administration Menahem Milson.

The incident took place at 6:00 am as the bus was enroute to Jerusalem transporting more than 60 workers to their jobs.

Earlier Jamil Musa al-Froukh, the head of the local Village League, his brother Jamal, Salim Hussein al-Jaradat, his son Faris, and Awad al-Frakh set up a roadblock and guarded it with M-16s and Israeli Uzi machine guns. They stopped the bus, ordering the people to get down one by one and stand in line, and then collected their IDs. One of the passengers refused to show his ID, claiming that no one had the right to check IDs except the police. The man spoke loudly to a gathering crowd and protested the presence of the Village League in Sa'ir. (Local rejection of the Israeli-backed league in the past several months has led to the village being put under curfew three times.)

The gathering around the bus stopped, but quickly grew into a loud demonstration against the Village Leagues, and the civil administration. When the residents demanded the return of their IDs, the leaguers shot into the air, creating pandemonium in the village. More than 1000 people then attacked the armed men using clubs, stakes and stones. Six people were injured, including the head of the Village League, before the leaguers ran away protecting themselves with intensive cover fire.

An eyewitness told *Al Fajr*, "The people followed the League members until they reached the house of the head of the Village League, Jamil al-Froukh." He added that Jamil's wife and three children were told to leave the house, which was then broken into and burned. The same fate befell the house of Salim Jaradat, the secretary of the league. Residents reported that four Israeli military vehicles wheeled into the centre of Sa'ir and began shooting. Residents were followed through the narrow streets of the village and into the surrounding mountains.

More than 400 people were arrested and severely beaten by the Israeli soldiers and the Village League members. "We were told after the incidents," said one resident, "that the roadblock and the ID checking, as well as the shooting, were aimed at terrifying the people into receiving a visit by Milson the same day in honor of the appointment of the new village council." During the night 40 more people were arrested after house searches conducted by the Israeli soldiers with the aid of the Village Leaguers.

The next morning armed members of the league beat any person they came across that day after taking their IDs. In one incident, four residents of the village, Sabri al-Shalaideh, Mahmoud Thalji, Abed Darwish, 65 years old, and his son Muhammad Darwish were ordered out their car and forced to face a wall with their hands raised. When Muhammad Abed Darwish refused to carry out the order the four were beaten severely, and Abed Darwish was struck on the head by one of the Village League members with a large stone. His son Muhammad retaliated by attacking Jamil al-Froukh and wounding him on the head. Muhammadwas also hospitalized in Hebron. Residents of the village again interfered by stoning the leaguers and forced them to run, leaving their roadblocks behind.

A 70-year-old man, who himself was released from Hebron prison, told *Al Fajr*, "About 400 people who were arrested from the village are still in Hebron prison; 40 were transferred to al-Farra'a prison in the Jordan Valley. Israelis threatened the prisoners that they would not be given back their IDs, or be released from prison, unless they pay IS 110 to join the Village League in Sa'ir and sign a paper saying they would support the Village Leagues everywhere."

FEDERATION ANNOUNCED

An official federation of the seven West Bank Village Leagues was announced, August 30. The "new federation" is headed by the head of the largest branch, the Hebron League head, Mustafa Dudeen.

The announcement came only days after Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon met with the league heads at the Israeli "civil administration" headquarters, in Beit Il.

Sharon has announced that Israel will turn its attention to implementing "autonomy" as soon as the war in Lebanon is over. The Israeli defence minister's meeting with the Village Leaguers was, apparently, in line with this statement.

"The unification of the Village League branches is another Israeli manoeuvre to boost the leagues into a solid alternative leadership position," a local expert on the Village Leagues told *Al Fajr*.

Since its creation in 1978, the Hebron area Village Leagues has remained the political and financial seat for the six other leagues, due to the fact that Dudeen, a former Jordanian minister, is the only league chief of any stature.

Menahem Milson, head of the civil administration and initiator of the idea of village leagues has been promoting Dudeen as a "West Bank figure" in the Israeli media.

The leagues have adopted the Israeli version of autonomy, stepping officially into the political arena as the only Arab advocates of the scheme in which they are scheduled now to take a large role.

With the arrival of US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger to Israel, September 1, and his scheduled meetings with "West Bank figures," observers believe it may spell the first high level meetings between US officials and the leagues.

BEIT KAHIL AGAIN

Residents of Beit Kahil village, near Hebron, complained October 8, that the Israeli backed Village League is still trying to push through an electricity project, despite an order from the Israeli High Court to stop the work. A group of residents told *Al Fajr* that in an advertisement published in *Al Quds* daily for three running days, October 6-8, a Village Leagues sponsored "Village Electricity Company" invited contractors to place their bids for linking the village to an electricity grid.

An earlier attempt to install electric poles in the village was stopped after violent clashes between residents and armed Leaguers. A well known Village League personality shot and killed Daoud Atawneh, a 24 year old teacher from the village and wounded seven others, June 19, during the confrontation. Villagers insist that their present generator is sufficient for their needs and say they do not need an electricity project. They also say that the "Village Electricity Company" is a front for a handful of villagers, who are known for collaboration with Village Leagues.

'SHARIF' COMES HOME:

SORRY, SON

Sharif Sweity, son of Beit Awwa's village council head, is perhaps the only Palestinian "prisoner of war" to be released by the Israelis during the Lebanon war and returned to the occupied territories.

Sharif, who claims to have been beaten by Israeli soldiers at the Nabatiyeh prison camp, Ansar, was escorted past the Lebanon-Israel border and on to his hometown by Israeli military cars and a Village League accompaniment, August 3. The 25-year-old was held only a few days at Ansar, an Israeli military camp in South Lebanon where over 9000 Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians are being interned. His quick release was due to the intervention of Village League godfather Mustafa Dudeen who put Sharif's father in office in Beit Awwa.

Sharif's personal history in Lebanon has always caused suspicion among Beit Awwa residents. After spending seven years at the four-year Arab University in west Beirut, Sharif was imprisoned by the PLO on a charge of spying.

Fellow students from the West Bank visited Abu Sharif and said his son would be released if he dropped his political ties to the Village League and stopped cooperating with the military government. Abu Sharif refused.

His son was kept in prison for 14 months until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon when the PLO released all prisoners and armed them for self-defence. Sharif, instead of defending Palestinian positions, headed straight for the Israeli lines and was promptly rearrested — this time by Israeli soldiers.

It took the Israelis a few days to sort out who was who. Then Sharif came home to two stuffed lambs, Village League "victory shooting — and a hostile local Palestinian population.

BEIT SIRA SAYS 'NO WAY' TO NEW ROAD:

Leaguers Shoot Seven

Seven Palestinians and two members of the Village League were injured, July 4, in Beit Sira village, Ramallah, when Village League mercenaries opened fire on crowds of residents. Israeli border police imposed a curfew on the village and arrested four people.

The attack started when Village League personnel arrived in the village with bulldozers and an asphalt truck and announced their intention to "open a new road in the village," despite the residents' rejection. Groups of villagers stood in the way to stop the Village League action.

As villagers and League supporters jostled, an armed Village Leaguer shot one resident. Clashes then escalated as angry villagers turned on the Leaguers with and stones. Village Lea ole then fired indiscriminately, according to eyewitnesses, into the crowd, wounding Issa Abdullah Sammour in his chest and back, Ameeh Issa Sammour in the neck, Muhammad Mahmoud Sammour in his left leg, Odeh Mustafa Rashid in his right thigh, Adel Ahamd Sammour in his thigh, and Sabha Mahmoud Sammour in her thigh. Akileh Ahmad Abu Safieh was beaten unconscious.

Two of the attackers were injured in the melee, one of whom was Khamis, known to be the deputy of Jamil al-Khatib, head of the Ramallah Village League. The injured village residents were taken to Ramallah Hospital for treatment. Israeli police took the two injured village Leaguers to an Israeli hospital in Jerusalem. Meanwhile border police arrived in ge and imposed a curJoint patrols of border police and Village League members patrolled the village, forcing residents into the main square. They confiscated the ID cards of a number of residents and arrested four men: Yousef Muhammad Yousef, Ahmad Muhammad Suleiman, Mahmoud Muhammad Yousef and Moussa Hassan Mahmoud.

As news of the shooting reached Ramallah, dozens of Palestinians rushed to the hospital to donate blood. At the same time, hundreds of striking workers from Beit Liqya, a neighbouring village, attempted to reach Beit Sira to help but were stopped by the Israelis.

National institutions in the Ramallah area condemned the attack on Beit Sira as "barbaric" and issued calls for a social boycott of Village League members.

PRISONS AND PRISONERS

THE SEEDS OF RESISTANCE LITERATURE

By Muhammad Khalil Elian

In the beginning, I offer my thanks to *Al Fajr* for its bold initiative in embracing and giving attention to the literary production of prisoners. This promising literature cannot be developed or advanced as part of the Palestinian resistance literature, without the attention of our national press in the occupied land.

The literature produced from detention is one of the most important sides of our general cultural activity. It suffers from severe restrictions by the Israeli authorities as part of their campaign against the Palestinian prisoners, to empty them of revolutionary content by transforming them into bodies without potential influence. The most dangerous part of this campaign is that dealing with culture because of its role in increasing the awareness of the prisoner and in developing and widening his knowledge. Culture is the most potent part of his steadfastness in the prison and a basic guarantee which increases his faith in the justice of his cause. The Israeli authorities tighten their grip to try and suffocate the prisoners and not offer them any factor strengthening their steadfastness. The prisoners are confined away from the external environment and deprived of sources of power. The authorities have adopted a policy of promoting cultural ignorance. This remains a constant policy during the long years of imprisonment.

At the beginning of my detention, the Israeli authorities did not allow any book to enter the prison regardless of language or content. They banned exercise books, pens and paper. If they discovered any of these materials with any prisoner, it would be considered an offence. A 'guilty' prisoner could be confined for a week or more in solitary confinement and sometimes beaten.

The only sources of news at that time were the news bulletin on the "Voice of Israel" and *Al Anba* newspaper. Then, cultural activity, and we note this with pride and dignity, depended mainly on personal knowledge acquired by prisoners outside. They exchanged their knowledge secretly. Initially they smuggled in pens and wrote on cigarette papers or dried-out butter wrappers.

These primitive attempts reflect the strong will of prisoners and their ability to bypass all kinds of sieges. We look on those attempts now as the first seeds of "stunted growth" which have developed into a productive tree. The Israeli authorities abandoned some of their earlier procedures concerning culture and opened some holes in the wall of the siege. For example, they now allow in Hebrew newspapers and *Al Quds*, plus some books, exercise books and pens. These improvements are the results of a persistent struggle waged by prisoners and watered by their blood.

Despite the law which allows every prisoner two books each month, in reality prisoners obtain only one book every four to five months.

A majority of books are returned. It is enough that the censor reads the word "Palestine" or "revolution" on the cover or inside a book to decide that it is among the banned books. On many occasions a book has been allowed in one prison but banned in another.

The national newspapers and magazines are still banned even if written in Hebrew.

It is painful that we only hear about a newspaper or a magazine after several years of publication. To these procedures we should add the banning of radios and TV sets and the impossibility to register in universities.

We cannot talk about the existence of 'detention literature' which will reach the maturity of other resistance literature. All that is written in prisons should be considered adolescent attempts, but at the same time respectable.

The Israeli authorities consider what is written in the prison banned material.

I think that the reader will understand to a certain extent how destructive, painful and disgusting it is to work for a week or more writing a story or poem and then to have a guard confiscate it in cold blood! They confiscate our ideas, efforts, feelings, emotions.

They want to know the limits of our thoughts — but do they know the ideas which have ripened in our skulls that urge us to write — or even to scratch on the walls of the cell? Anyone entering a cell can observe that it is covered with slogans, poetry and painting.

Muhammad Elian is serving a life sentence in Nafha prison.

Story of Torture From Nablus Prison

by Felicia Langer

I wish to bring to your attention the case of Nasim Abd al-Jalil Audi Ahmad Daoud, 22, originally from Yabroud village in the Hebron district, the West Bank. He was arrested by Israeli military personnel, January 30, 1982, while taking part in an operation to infiltrate the West Bank from Jordan, plant a weapons cache and then return to Jordan. He is a member of Fatah.

When I met him for the first time in his Nablus prison cell, August 11, 1982, I could see that large parts of his scalp were missing — covered with pink scar tissue — and I asked him what had happened to him. This is what he told me:

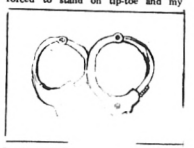
"After my arrest I was taken to Nablus prison where I made a full confession to membership of Fatah and taking part in the operation to plant the weapons. Two days later I was transferred to a place which I and other prisoners knew as 'Sarafand.' I was photographed when I entered Nablus, and again upon entry to 'Sarafand.' I was in good health.

"When I was brought to 'Sarafand' I was given a military-type uniform and a bag was put over my head. An interrogator who I knew as 'Abu Farid' began questioning me, he called me a liar and started hitting me with his fist. Later he called in guards who took me out of the interrogation room. I was stripped naked by them, handcuffed (scars from handcuffs are still visible on Nasim's wrists) and put outside in the rain. From time to time they also hosed me down with cold water. I was forced to stand outside all night. From time to time I was beaten with clubs and fists, and also kicked.

"The next day I was also taken to see 'Abu Farid.' The interrogation was the same, with him asking me questions, calling me a liar and hitting me with his fists. At one time during this interrogation I started bleeding from the nose after he hit my head against the wall. I was again led outside, stripped and left all night with periodic beatings. This procedure went on for four days. I was beaten all over my body, including my feet, and I was swollen all over. At one point in the four days I was offered food, but was so sick I couldn't eat.

"On the fourth day I was tied outside and they brought a stren and placed it next to my ear. Three people started hitting me: one beat me on my head with something hard, another hit me on my genitals and another on my back. This type of beating continued for three or four days. I was handcuffed permanently both inside and outside my cell.

"During these beatings, my head, which was a specific target for those beating me, started to swell. My body was already swollen from the earlier beatings and my hands also began to swell up from the handcuffs. From time-to-time during this period I was forced to stand on tip-toe and my



hands were forced up on a wall all the time. All the time I was kept naked. I asked 'Abu Farid' for a doctor, he told me that I could see a doctor after I spoke.

"After three or four days I was interrogated by four interrogators. Two I knew as 'Abu Nur' and 'Abu Ibrahim,' the other two I didn't know. 'Abu Nur' hit me on my swollen aching head. Later they offered me food and when they realized that I couldn't eat and they saw the cuts on my wrists from the handcuffs, they took me to a doctor. The doctor was based in the same detention camp.

"The doctor was young, about 27 or 28. He spoke little Arabic, but what he did know he spoke with an Egyptian accent. He had light hair and eyes. The doctor gave me treatment for the cuts on my arms and a shot to stimulate appetite. When I told him about my headaches he told me, 'pour water on it.' I told him they poured water on me already and that it didn't help. I showed him my body which was covered with the greenish marks of old bruises, the soles of my feet which were swollen and other marks of the beatings. He didn't react.

"After I saw the doctor I was taken back to the same interrogators. This went on every day for about two weeks, and every night I was tortured by the soldiers. After some time, I don't remember exactly how long, a soldier hit my head against a wall and blood poured out of it. I fainted. It was evening. When I woke up it was midnight and the doctor came in. I told him my head was aching and he saw some of the blood. He brought scissors and cut some of the hair and skin off my scalp and put on some medicine. A disgusting smell came out. He then brought a knife and cut off other parts of my scalp and medicine in the wounds. I told him at this was from ... atings. He ... who ... me and I told him I didn't know because of the sack on my head. He said, 'It is done to make you speak, if you don't speak you'll be beaten up.'

"For 15 days I was left with the same disgusting smell coming out of my head. When I asked the doctor what would happen, he told me that I might never recover. He called in the interrogators and spoke to them in Hebrew. After the 15 days were up another doctor came. They said he was a specialist. He was about 35-40, tall and thin and wore glasses. Both doctors wore civilian clothes.

"When the specialist came all the interrogators were there. He took a knife and again cut away parts of my scalp. I saw him pull out skin with hair on it. He put it on a piece of paper. The knife was covered with flesh and blood poured out of my head. The specialist put that on the paper too and showed it to the interrogators. One said, in Arabic, in front of the doctor that it was done to make me tell the truth.

"I started to slowly recover from the head wounds and during all that period — about 12 days — I complained of headaches. I wasn't given any medication for it. I was still interrogated all the time and soldiers would enter my cell and beat me on my body. This time they didn't touch my head, but they ...rsed me all the time.

"When I was released from 'Sarafand' and sent to Nablus, the Nablus prison authorities refused to accept me when they saw my condition. I was only accepted after they had taken me to a nearby military hospital and a doctor there had written a report.

"While I was being held in Nablus I saw a representative of the Red Cross and filed a complaint. If anyone doubts my story they should look at the photographs taken at Nablus and at 'Sarafand' two days later, and compare them with how I look now."

All through the year 1982, Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails daily suffered under difficult conditions. Yet news about action taken against prisoners and strikes by prisoners in reaction takes sometimes months to emerge from prison through lawyers or family members and then await the rare opportunity of publication.

Almost every news story or report about prisons and prisoners was either totally censored out or so mutilated as to be beyond use, thus keeping our readers unaware of the ongoing problems of Palestinian prisoners. On the pages below we publish what we think are important and representative stories about prison conditions.

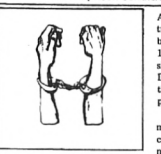
PALESTINIAN WOMEN STRIKE IN ISRAELI JAIL

News of a strike by Palestinian political prisoners at Neve Tirza, Israel's women's prison, leaked out, this week. According to reports from the jail, all 38 Palestinian prisoners are refusing to work. They are demanding an end to attacks and harassment by guards and the release of five women from solitary confinement.

The strike started following clashes between prisoners and guards. Prison sources say clashes started when Yola Sa'at got into an argument with a warden about the Lebanon war. The guard, prisoners say, became hysterical and poured coffee over, and threw glasses at the prisoner. A fight started and the authorities called up a special unit to 'control' the prisoners. No casualties were reported.

In disciplinary proceedings, held *in camera* and with defendants not allowed to represent themselves, the prison governor sentenced Yola Sa'at, Halima Fretad, Naameh al-Hilu, Amal Wahdan and Fatme Mughrabi to 14 days solitary confinement. No papers are allowed into the jail, all radios were grabbed and the prisoners are locked up for 23 hours-a-day. Visits by relatives have been cancelled for two months.

After sentences were announced the 38 women prisoners then declared a strike.



SIXTH TOWN ARREST FOR JERUSALEM TEACHER

Zuheira Kamal, a 27-year old East Jerusalem school teacher, was given her sixth six-month town-arrest order, November 26. The order, signed by the military commander of the southern district compels her to go to the Russian Compound at 7 am and 2 pm every day. Zuheira, who teaches physics at the Teachers' Training Centre for Women in al-Tireh has now reported her name for 30 consecutive months. The order specifies "security" as the reasons for her administrative detention.

Zuheira has been allowed to teach classes since August 1980 but comments, "I cannot supervise the training programme offered to my students, nor I can attend training courses in the West Bank."

The first town-arrest order was issued June 9, 1980. She remained at home for 45 days during which she wrote her lectures and sent them to her students. Zuheira explains that the Israelis have not come forward with any good reason for her restriction.

Zuheira was arrested August 2, 1979 under administrative detention for six months, but released on December 13, 1979. Then the authorities said she was a political activist in the DFLP. "I vigorously rejected these accusations in my appeal," Zuheira told *Al Fajr*.

She was released from administrative detention after a campaign by West Bank national institutions and international organisations like Amnesty International and Palestine solidarity groups. Zuheira's case brought additional complications after she appointed Ibrahim Abu Ata, an East Jerusalem advocate, as her lawyer. He was taken off the case by the military under an order according to which only lawyers approved by the military can appear for administrative detainees. Zuheira was detained initially for one month, which the Israeli High Court extended for another three months, October 5, 1979. The Israeli Ministry of Justice appointed Amnon Cohen as defence lawyer November 5. "I protested against this," Zuheira said, "and then on November 11, there was another High Court hearing and after two-days I was released."

The international pressure for Zuheira's release has been kept up. In 1980, Amnesty International adopted her as a Prisoner of Conscience. Zuheira's case was discussed at the UN International Conference of Women in Copenhagen in 1981 after she wrote about the administrative detention of Palestinian women. Zuheira told *Al Fajr* that she will contact progressive Israeli women in her continuing campaign against detention.

ISRAELIS IMPRISON LEBANESE SOCIAL WORKER

Miriam Abd al-Jalil, responsible for the social assistance for Palestinian women and children in Burj al-Shemali camp, near Sidon, was arrested, November 1, by the Israeli army and transferred to a prison in Israel. Her arrest has been denounced to the International Red Cross by an inmate of the Israeli prison who happened to know of her presence there and two days ago by a Swiss Church delegation which has just returned from a visit to the refugee camps in South Lebanon. Miriam Abd al-Jalil is a social assistant for Najda, a Lebanese aid association that provides work in embroidery and other crafts to Palestinian women, and kindergartens for children in the camps.

ARREST FOR PRISONERS COMMITTEE HEAD

Israeli occupation authorities arrested Khalil Abu Ziad, chairman of the Committee for Prisoners and Their Families, November 9 on charges of violating the town arrest order imposed on him in Azzariya, West Bank. He is being held in Ramallah prison pending military trial.

Khalil Abu Ziad, who spent 10 years from 1970-1980 in Israeli jails was placed under town arrest in April as punishment for collecting food and milk relief packages to be sent to the Golan Heights during their strike (and Israeli counter-blockade) protesting the issuance of Israeli identity cards.

AL BIREH COUNCILLOR DETAINED 48 DAYS

Israeli authorities released Dr. Azmi Shu'aibi, a dentist and member of the al-Bireh municipality, Aug. 23 after detaining him for 48 days in Ramallah prison. No charges were raised against him in a court hearing July 15, but the presiding military judge decided to detain him for an additional 40 days on the basis of a secret file presented by Israeli interrogators. Shu'aibi was arrested July 7.

"During the period of detention, the Israeli interrogators made attempts to get me to change my political views. They threatened to keep me in prison for an extended period," Shu'aibi told *Al Fajr*."They tried to conclude that I am a member of the PLO because I am against the Village Leagues and because I support the idea of establishing an independent Palestinian state in the occupied territories."

At the end of June, Shu'aibi was summoned to meet the chief civil administrator for Ramallah. When he refused, the administrator sent police to bring him. During the meeting, Shu'aibi was threatened with imprisonment if he continued opposing the civil administration. The next day Israel Radio reported that the civil administrator said he met Shu'aibi and discussed with him the situation of the city. Shu'aibi later denied the report in *Al Shaab* newspaper.

MASS IMPRISONMENT

During a 10-day curfew imposed on the 50,000 residents of Jabalia camp, Gaza Strip, during last April's uprising in the occupied territories, the Israeli occupation forces employed much practiced methods of collective punishment — among them, arbitrary beatings and arrests. Here are two brief accounts.

If That's Not Enough . . .

A construction worker returned to Jabalia from his job in a Tel Aviv suburb on the fifth day of the curfew, April 18 — straight into a waiting jeep.

"It was about 3:30-4:00 pm and I was coming back to Jabalia from work at the construction site where I'd been for the past week. As I approached the camp, a group of soldiers called to me from their jeep. They took my ID.

" 'Where do you live?' 'Block 4.' 'How come you've gone out of the camp during the curfew?' 'I didn't. I've just come from work in Israel.' 'You are out of your house during the curfew!'

"They ordered me into the jeep and took me to the military compound. There they asked me again why I'd broken the curfew and again I told them I'd just entered the camp for the first time. They said nothing to these protestations, just told me to put my hands on the wall, tied them behind my back and blindfolded my eyes.

"They beat me on the legs, then the arms, then my back. Then they made me sit in the yard for three hours. Finally they let me go home without my ID. I asked an officer to let me go to the hospital to have my wounds treated. He refused . . .

"There's something else I want to say. We go to work for Israeli companies because we have no other choice. There at the checkpoint they strip us going and coming back everyday. If that's not enough, they take taxes and force us to take water and electricity through their companies. Then they come and beat us and shoot us. And they fine us for a little extra. Then there's the curfew — we can hardly feed our families after a week off from working."

"How to Become Guilty"

On the sixth day, a young man went outside to rescue his daughter from the soldiers. He was detained for several days, beaten, tried in court and fined.

"My three-year-old daughter slipped out of the house and saw soldiers in the street. She became afraid and sat on the ground, crying. When I heard her I ran out to get her.

"The soldiers came over and took my ID. Then they took me to the military compound where they kept me sitting 2½ hours in the sun. There were 17 others there . Before they blindfolded me, I could see the others were all blindfolded, had their hands tied and were being beaten.

"At 12:30 they took us back home.

"The next evening, about 6:00 pm a jeep circled through the camp and soldiers announced that anyone who had 'lost' an ID should report to the compound. When I arrived there I saw more than 700 men assembled. Anyone who made a noise was beaten. One-by-one we had to sign confessions that we had gone out during the curfew. They gave us IS 5000 bail to be forfeited if we arrived at the Gaza military headquarters later than 8:00 am the following day.

"The next morning, April 21, we went to the headquarters, most of us waiting outside from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. About 200 were sent to the military court for trial and were fined IS 1500-to-2000, with four days to pay.

"I was told to return the next day. That day about 70 were tried at the court with the same fines. The remaining men and boys were told to return on Monday for their trial. On Monday I was tried in a 40-minute session, along with 21 others.

"Of course many people didn't have the money to pay. In our quarter, neighbours each donated IS 100 to give to those sentenced."

The dusty yard, hundreds of boys scurrying outside and inside, the heavy bell, blackboards, the class record, papers, maps, seats, walls, the taste, humanity, international law . . . all these things indicated that the building was a school but:

— When the American-built Israeli planes swept over low and at tremendous speed, our small ears did not hear the planes' roar till the end.

— I am in the third grade. All my answers were correct. The lesson was almost finishing . . . when . . .

— I am in the second grade. I had my hand up to give an answer. I was so sure of it, when . . .

— I am in the first grade with my twin brother, Latif. We were going to divide the coins which were given us when . . .

— I am a teacher in Bahar al-Baqar school. I was going to . . .

— We were parents, brothers, sisters, of the kids in Bahar al-Baqar when . . .

. . . When the room filled with smoke, darkness and dust.

. . . When I wanted to protect myself behind my teacher I saw his head roll down and his eyes open, looking at me in astonishment and fear.

. . . When I fell on the ground and saw two pilots.

. . . When I wet my pants while laughing hysterically — I didn't know why?!

. . . When I put my fingers into my ears and thought, there will be no school tomorrow.

— I heard something noisy.

— I heard roaring.

— I felt something warm.

. . . When my head crashed against the wall and I began to feel, I saw that a big piece of the roof was going to fall on my face.

. . . When I began to hate myself because I had fought with Zeinab, the first one who cried out and fell on the ground.

. . . When blood and dust covered the ground, copybooks, maps and walls.

. . . I did not know exactly what happened.

. . . I knew exactly what was going on.

. . . I longed to see my baby brother.

. . . I asked myself how my family would live after me.

. . . I thought that my father would not be able to come and carry away my body because he was injured a few weeks ago.

. . . I smelled the perfume of my mother in the clothes which she sewed for me yesterday.

"All of our planes returned peacefully to their bases," the Israeli radio broadcast.

A child from Israel: "Those who killed you, started digging my grave also."

We, the kids of Bahar al-Baqar, died.

We remained steadfast and self-sacrificing. We, the sons of the people, declare our solidarity with all oppressed peoples of the world.

The stomach of the fox cannot digest the sickle.

BAHR AL-BAQAR SCHOOL

by Muhammad Nafa'a

Israeli planes bombarded an elementary school in Bahr al-Baqar, Egypt, in 1969 during the war of attrition between Israel and Egypt. Dozens of young students were killed or injured. Nafa'a's story is a powerful literary reflection of the atrocity of Israel in using the most sophisticated weapons and technologies against unarmed students.

Literature of Palestine

by Said al-Ghazali

Am I a Palestinian Odysseus
in the age of massacres?
Am I the only Jesus in this hell on earth?
Who am I?
Who am I?
The murdered-militant?

A Prayer Before Execution

My beloved murdered Mary
My lips chanted your sweet-smelling name
I endured
No, no I did not like exiles,
but endured
Why did they hang me?
My heart's birds were flapping their wings
in your shade.
I rose to receive the beautiful death
And the protest of the murdered,
hovered on my lips
Why did they hang me?
Why did they hang?
Why?
repeatedly
killed.
kings highwaymen chased me with their daggers
and ambushes.

My Mother

My murdered-beloved mother, Mary,
I took refuge in the vision of your holiness
My arms were tied together
I was to walk alone on roads
alone without comrades . . .
without helpers.
The kings were silent
I left their silent tombs
broke the fetters,
resisted.
the silent, sad, autumn passed.
I felt that you said to me:

"You will not be forgotten while you resist."

I, exhausted, took a rest under the shade of
your dream:
the beautiful homeland
the song of murder
the martyrs' comrades

* * * * *

Am I a Palestinian Odysseus in the age of massacres?
Am I the only Jesus in this hell of a world?
Who am I?
Who am I?
the murdered-militant?

* * * * *

Trees and roads grew in my body
Your eyes, Mary, the two larks,
Your inspiring face hovered around my corpse.
I rose,
Chanted your sweet-smelling name
I endured.
No, no I did not like exiles,
but I endured.
Am I a Palestinian Odysseus in the age of massacres?
Am I the only Jesus in this hell on earth?
Who am I?

GLOW RECITATIONS TO THE PALESTINIAN MARY

Why?
Why?

Execution

My beloved Mary,
I, since the early days of my childhood, had dreamed to
hover like a bird around the hills of your brow,
Your compassionate eyes;
Your big heart;
Your hair — scattering like windy-forests.
You said to me:
"You will not be forgotten while you resist."
When I was hanged,
the newspaper lamented my death on the back page,
the trick-track players granted me the badge of honour,
the signs said as the funeral passed across
the town's yard:
"He was killed when he attempted to cross
the terrible borders."

Identity

"Who are you?"
the sea asked, the waves hugged me
the dissipated remnants said:
"I am the murdered"
I left the kings' marble tombs
Expelled . . . Imprisoned . . .
repeatedly

Battles

In battles,
Your features throbbed in my mind, murdered Mary
as river's waters,
and roses,
throbbing with life and bullets.
The battles spread everywhere
The soldiers trod on my passion,
crept as numerously as figures of stars
50,000 martyrs fell from my body.

The Withdrawal

I swept out the layers of barbaric murder
from my corpse
I withdrew
The aircraft carriers discharged all their cargoes
all bullets, all grenades were hurled
at my corpse that never dies
at my town that never dies
I withdrew
the massacres prevailed.

The March

The waves cast me onto your shores, Mary
I walked
walked
walked . . .

Who am I?
the murdered-militant?
Why do they hang me now?
Am I a Palestinian Jesus?
Mary, your eyes are the mines of life
and birth
the throes of my death are long
I do not die
the earth is a withered rose
the kings are silent,
silent,
silent.
Planes discharge all their cargoes,
Massacres intensify,
into my body that never dies
into my town that never dies
Kings held 20 summits
they clanged the glasses in the toast of the massacres
I spread through the night of their defeat,
1,000,000 stars
* * * * *

A New Chapter

My beloved, Mary
I write now a new chapter.
My lips chant your sweet-smelling name . . .

FOUR MONTHS AFTER END OF GENERAL STRIKE:

LEGAL VACUUM IN THE GOLAN

by Daoud Kuttab

A sense of confusion and disarray prevails in the four Israeli-occupied Syrian Druse villages on the Golan Heights, four months after the end of the five-month-plus general strike declared by the Syrian residents of the Golan early this year.

The state of confusion or "legal vacuum," as some residents term it, follows the failure of the Israeli authorities to impose a change in identity cards on the Druse population after the Israeli Knesset passed the Golan Bill in December 1981. Under this bill the Syrian Golan Heights were annexed to Israel.

Golan residents interviewed this week told *Al Fajr* that despite promises by Israeli officials and Druse religious leaders in the Galilee, no action has been taken regarding the legal status of the 13,000 Golan Druse residents, who have refused to carry Israeli IDs and whose previously held military-issued identity cards were confiscated by force during the Israeli siege on the four Golan Heights villages last March.

Salman Fakhr al-Din, a resident of Majdal Shams, told *Al Fajr* that Israeli public institutions have been instructed not to allow any transaction unless applicants are carrying an Israeli Interior Ministry-issued ID card. "That means driving licenses, car sales, building permits, birth, marriage and death certificates, new bank accounts, money deposits or withdrawals or other such transactions must be performed by an Israeli ID card holder," he explained.

According to Fakhr al-Din, who was detained along with 12 other Golan residents in February and released when the strike was called off, the Golan population was lied to. "At the time, Sheikh Nour al-Din Halabi, a Druse religious judge from Daliat al-Karmel, promised that we would be provided with special papers that would enable us to carry on our transactions and travel freely until the stalemate over the ID cards could be resolved."

The 35-year-old Syrian explained that he has paid two fines amounting to IS500 for traveling without an Israeli ID card. Other residents have preferred to spend several days in jail rather than pay a fine for travelling without ID cards.

Hospitals, Visits, Students

Golan residents not holding Israeli ID cards have always been welcomed at private hospitals in Nazareth and Jerusalem. Since the *Kupat Holim* (Israeli National Health Insurance) required ID cards, and the cost at the Israeli hospitals is astronomical, residents went to the French and English-run private hospitals in Nazareth and the Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem where they were treated for a low fee, and even free in some cases. Israeli authorities have now forced the Nazareth hospitals not to accept non-ID card holders, threatening them with a cut-off of *Kupat Holim* patients if they continue to treat the Golan residents. Makassed Hospital continues to treat the residents for free, however.

Family visits between residents in the Golan and their relatives in Syria, an arrangement agreed on by Israel three years ago and carried out under the auspices of the UN, have been suspended since the Golan strike began last February. Relatives had been allowed to meet in a UN building near the borders once every few weeks for two-hours. Now it is no longer allowed.

University students who have in the past been allowed to study in Syrian universities are now barred from returning. Nor have new students been allowed to leave for the Syrian universities. Among the students wishing to return are university graduates, some of whom are now dentists and doctors, sorely needed in the Golan. Many of the graduates have accepted teaching jobs in villages close to the Golan border until their return is allowed by the Israeli authorities. A Red Cross representative in Tel Aviv refused to give any information about the new situation, but messages from students which have reached their families in the Golan explain that the delay is on the Israeli side.

High school students in the Golan are also suffering from the ID card situation. Israeli education ministry communiques have instructed that no student can apply for the *bagrut* (matriculation) exam without the Israeli ID. Entry into any Israeli university is conditional on the result of the exam.

Taxes

Land and homeowners in the Golan Heights have recently received tax assessments to be paid to the Israeli Finance Ministry. Residents complain that the assessments are very high. Samih and Najwa Ayyoub, a newly married couple, explained that the tax estimates are based in proportion to the size of the property owned, irrespective of the income of the family. The Ayyoub couple who, because they have refused IDs, cannot obtain an official wedding certificate, admit that residents so far have refused to pay their taxes. Unless there is a breakthrough in the legal status of the Golan Druse residents, sooner or later, all will be forced to pay.

Apples

The Golan Heights produces some of the best apples in the Middle East. Although this year's apple harvest was not abundant, apple growers were satisfied with the financial outcome of sales. They explained that the Israeli apples were not very good and that this kept the price of the Golan apples high. Their only market, however, is Israel since they are no longer allowed to export to any Arab country.

Control over the land and water supplies of the four Golan Druse villages remains a cause for concern to many Golanis. The 13,000 Druse residents who stayed in their homes after 1967 have been successful in protecting most of their property from confiscation. Natural water resources that have always supplied the Syrian Druse farmers with water for irrigation and drinking have not been taken over, despite many attempts to do so. Israeli (Labour) settlements in the Golan which were instrumental in bringing about the Golan annexation bill have been demanding that the water sources be turned over to the government-backed 'Mekorot' water company.

Golan residents have staunchly refused to turn over the water resources to Israeli control and were successful in obtaining a clear promise by the Israeli government not to touch their land or water resources before they agreed to call off their general strike last August.

Many residents are sceptical of the Israeli government honouring its promise to keep "hands off." They cite the ID card issue as an example of the government's bad faith towards the Golan population. "As long as we were striking and protesting, they were willing to come to terms with us. But as soon as we stopped they completely ignored us," explained an apple orchard owner in Mas'adeh.

The Syrian government, on the other hand, has been active in developing the area closest to the occupied Golan villages. The ministry of agriculture has terraced and ploughed land owned by Majdal Shams residents and planted the land with olive and fruit trees. The government has promised to hold profits from harvests in escrow for the owners. Landowners have sent power-of-attorney forms to Golani students studying in Syrian universities to collect the expected profits from the land.

LAND CONFISCATION IN THE GALILEE:

20 VILLAGES MAY LOSE

More than 20 Arab villages in the Galilee could lose their remaining lands if fears concerning a plan to annex them to an Israeli council are realised.

According to the new plan, which was published without government consultation October 7, about 150,000 dunums will be annexed to the new Jewish regional council, Misgav Galil, which covers 23 settlements built in the last four years throughout the Galilee. About a third of the lands declared annexed belong to Sakhnin, Arrabeh and Deir Hanna. Attempts to grab this same area provoked the first Land Day demonstrations in 1976 in which six were killed. The land is known as "Military Area 9."

Over the past several years the three village councils have written dozens of letters to the Israeli Interior Ministry asking that Area 9 be formally included in their council boundaries. "We could then use them as a source of finance," said Raja Khatib, head of Deir Hanna local council. Khatib is also a member of the three-person committee set up by an emergency meeting of the three councils, October 30, to follow up the annexation issue and collect information.

All those affected by the annexation are concerned that the land will be out of the control of the Arab local councils. The right to impose and levy taxes will go to the Jewish regional council. This council will have the power to approve or disapprove any project which might be sponsored by the residents of the Arab villages concerned. Also the Arab local councils, according to these new measures, will not be able to execute any development project in the annexed areas. "This blocks any possible expansion of jurisdictional areas of Arab local councils," said Raja Khatib who views this step as part of a confiscation plan.

Deir Hanna council's area of jurisdiction is about 3900 dunums. The area annexed amounts to 9500 dunums.

All the lands declared annexed constitute the backbone of the economy of these villages, according to Sami Sarhan, head of the local council of Nahf from which 1100 dunums would be transferred to Misgav Galil. "This aggressive measure," he said, "not only minimizes the financial resources of our local council and others but will deprive all land owners concerned of their remaining lands."

Steps Taken by Councils

The heads of the local councils directly involved took preliminary measures after learning of the Israeli plan. They sent a letter to Minister of Interior Yosef Burg, Commissioner of the Northern District Israel Koenig and to the interior committee of the Knesset. In their letters they condemned and protested the annexation plan, demanded that the lands be put under the jurisdiction of the Arab local councils and that this new order be cancelled. They pointed out their previous correspondence concerning jurisdiction and asked the interior minister to meet them to discuss the matter.

In the meantime, the councils have started collecting signatures from local residents. These will be forwarded to the local and central authorities. "If the Israeli authorities follow through with their plan," said Raja Khatib, "other measures will be taken." Initial plans include an appeal to the High Court and protest rallies.

The Israeli daily *Davar* reported that the Syrian government has been active in building a new city near the borders with Israel. The Israeli newspaper, which ran a photo of the work, said that it is possible to see a residential area, an industrial area and an educational institution in the new city, about four kilometres north of the city of Quneitra — destroyed by the Israeli army before their withdrawal after the October 1973 war. The paper quoted UN officials as predicting that the Syrians will allow people to move into this new city starting next February.

OPPOSITION INSIDE AND OUTSIDE TO PRO-JORDAN INITIATIVE

Farouq Kaddoumi, head of the political department of the PLO, said November 21 that a peace document drawn up by pro-Jordan figures in the West Bank was "premature" and had provoked "resentment" from the PLO. Kaddoumi said that the only forum for peace proposals is the Palestine National Council, to be convened in the near future.

Kaddoumi's statement follows in full:

"The PLO received with utmost resentment what was attributed to some Palestinian personalities in the occupied territories regarding publishing a document about a political solution.

"This does not reflect the PLO's opinion nor the Palestinian people's opinion which it represents. We are on the eve of a PNC meeting and we will discuss all issues and the council will take the appropriate resolutions.

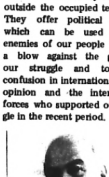
"We call on all the brothers not to make premature statements which will be misinterpreted and will possibly tend to create doubts concerning our unity. We are sure of the sincerity of all and their readiness to serve their sacred cause."

A "Palestinian peace document" was published two weeks ago by figures known to be closely associated with Jordan. It calls for the recognition of Israel and asks the PLO to agree to controversial UN Resolutions 242 and 338. The document was drawn up during a meeting at the offices of *Al Quds* newspaper November 9 and was leaked to foreign journalists.

One point in the document calls for the Palestinians' right to determine their own political future and acknowledges the PLO simply as "our legitimate representative." The document seeks to ground the diplomatic base for the Palestinians in recognition of UN Security Council resolutions, and also affirms support for the Fez Summit Resolutions and "the positive elements" in Reagan's peace initiative for the Middle East.

Farouq Kaddoumi

Yassir Abed Rabbo, a member of the PLO executive committe in a separate reaction to the document, told the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), November 21, that "some traditional figures in the West Bank issued a statement in which they claimed that they represent a sector of our people. We consider this statement a dangerous precedent and we call on these figures in the name of the PLO to stop these activities that blatantly contradict the political line of the PLO and Palestinian unity inside and outside the occupied territories. They offer political material which can be used by the enemies of our people to strike a blow against the gains of our struggle and to create confusion in international public opinion and the international forces who supported our struggle in the recent period.



Mayor Hilmi Hanoun

"They also serve the attempts to meddle with the resolutions of the Fez Summit and with Palestinian rights. This statement does not point, even with one word, to the main demand agreed on by all the Palestinian people—the establishment of a Palestinian state," he continued.

"The statement also calls on both the PLO and Israel—treating them equally—to mutually recognise each other. It is as if the sponsors of this document are not part of the Palestinian people. The sponsors also call on us to recognise (UN Security Council Resolution) 242 while at the same time America and Israel refuse to recognise the PLO without consideration of any conditions. The statement also includes a dangerous note, for it calls the PLO the 'legitimate representative' but not the 'sole' representative. The British Labour Party at its last conference passed more advanced resolutions than these figures. Therefore we call on them to halt these activities and call on all the national forces in the occupied territories to have one united and firm stand that will guarantee the continuation of Palestinian unity and to defy all the suspicious activities which attempt to undermine this unanimity," the statement concluded.

False Legitimacy

In an attempt to provide the document with legitimate nationalist support, *Al Quds* published a report, November 18, saying that Kaddoumi, as head of the PLO political department, had received the West Bank figures' peace initiative and said it would be discussed in the agenda of the PNC when it is convened. The newspaper attributed the news item to the Associated Press, but when *Al Fajr* asked the AP office in Tel Aviv about the story, the agency denied carrying reports quoting Kaddoumi.

During the last two weeks, the document has been submitted to all mayors of West Bank and Gaza Strip for signature.

In at least one follow-up meeting known to be held, at the house of the mayor of Tubas, November 17, several pro-Jordanian elements agreed to sign the document. But elsewhere the plan has met with a cold reception. It was reported, for example, that the mayors of Arrabeh, Qabatya, Yamoun and Jalameh in the northern West Bank all refused to attach their names to the document. One nationalist figure in Jenin described it as a dangerous document particularly at this time because of the paragraph which calls the residents of the occupied territories a party in the conflict. "This is obviously an attempt to hide behind the PLO," said the Jenin resident.

Because the document received sound negative reactions from inside and outside the West Bank, its sponsors decided to freeze the document. Mayor of Bethlehem Elias Freij, one of the main sponsors of the plan, told *Al Fajr* that the document had been frozen in order to gain "semi-unanimous support from all towns in the West Bank." Freij claimed that the document had the signatures of 300 personalities in the West Bank. Asked why he thought the PLO should recognize UN Resolutions 242 and 338, Freij answered that he believes the military solution is impossible and that the new document aims at paving the road for political dialogue between the PLO and US and Europe.

In answer to why the document has received such opposition, Freij said, "I respect others' opinions but I don't want to comment on this matter. There are groups of hypocrites. I believe in political dialogue and initiatives which are not available in our leadership. I am pessimistic about the present political situation," Freij added.

Mustafa Natahe, acting mayor of Hebron municipality, said that he is against the "Palestinian Peace Document" because is is signed by only a few people who do not represent general public opinion. It appeals to Resolution 242 which deals with the Palestinian cause as a refugee problem and not as a people. If there was no concrete military achievement in Lebanon that does not mean we should

Mayor Hanna Attrash

start a count down in offering compromises. Kaddoumi said the only forum qualified to deal with these issues is the Palestinian National Council.

"I did not attend the meeting in *Al Quds* newspaper. On November 15, someone brought the document to me to sign but I refused and the municipal council also refused to sign the document," Natahe told *Al Fajr*.

Hilmi Hanoun, mayor of Tulkarm, said that there are actually two documents but refused to divulge more details.

Hanna Attrash, mayor of Beit Sahour, said that he refused to sign the document because it is "incomplete and needs to be discussed in depth." "The PLO has the decisive word in these matters," Attrash added.

Amin Shihadeh, mayor of Bir Zeit, told *Al Fajr* that Palestinian public opinion in the West Bank supports the PLO. "There is no need to sign documents which would lead us in a wayward direction at the present time." Shihadeh reported, "Some people came to my house last week and asked me to sign a document called 'A Palestinian Peace Document' but I refused to sign it. I know that some (pro-Jordanian) people did sign it," Shihadeh said.

Bassam Shaka'a, mayor of Nablus, analysed the points of the document saying, "Reciprocal recognition between Israel and the PLO is not the main subject of the document. It is an attempt to create a new leadership in the occupied territories to parallel the PLO. The document, by acknowledging 242 and 338 cancels the role of the PLO and the right of Palestinians to establish an independent state."

Acting Mayor Mustafa Natahe

Afif Abdullah, elected member in Jenin municipality, told *Al Fajr*, "The document attempts to pull the carpet from under the PLO. These pro-Jordan figures do not represent the Palestinian people and they do not have any right to speak about the Palestinian cause. Only our representative, the PLO, can speak about these issues."

Azmi al-Shuaibi, elected member of al-Bireh municipal council, told *Al Fajr*, "It is the right of everybody to express his opinion — but within the frame of democracy. Those who made the document depend only on their narrow interests and serve Jordanian political activities. Some traditional figures in the occupied territories issued a statement in the name of our people, which we consider a dangerous precedent which contradicts the line of the PLO and the Palestinian people."

Haidar Abdel Shafi, director of the Red Crescent in Gaza, told *Al Fajr*, "Regarding the political situation after the Fez Summit, there is now an attempt to hide behind the PLO, benefiting from the political pressure which has been put on the PLO in order to delegate King Hussein to talk in the name of Palestinians. This is a step to give up the demand of establishing a Palestinian state and to deviate from the Fez resolutions to the Reagan initiative. Only the PLO has the right to talk about the right of self-determination and establishing a Palestinian state."

Hassan Abu Libdeh, a Bir Zeit teacher who was placed under town arrest a month ago, told *Al Fajr*, "We gave our word to the PLO whose blood is mixed with the blood of the martyrs in Lebanon. We are ready to sacrifice so that the PLO will represent all Palestinians. Regarding the document, I consider that its creators are fishing in muddy waters and that their attempts will not be fruitful. These attempts did not emerge from a vacuum. They were given the green light from the Jordanian regime benefiting from the present conditions. Only the Palestinian National Council has the right to talk about these issues."

Ali Jamal, who was imprisoned under administrative detention for seven years and recently released, told *Al Fajr*, "Only a few figures in Jenin support the confederation with Jordan. We clearly know that the occupation authorities do not want peace to prevail in the area." He described the designers of the document as being out of harmony with the majority of the people.

Post-Beirut PLO Relations Assessed

In its issue of November 12, 1982, *Al Fajr* published interviews with a number of Palestinian figures on current Middle East proposals, especially in the wake of the war in Lebanon.

For reasons beyond our control, three interviews, with Bashir Barghouti, editor of *Al-Talia* (under town arrest in al-Bireh), with Fadwa Labadi, head of the West Bank Women's Work Committee and member of the General Committee of Government School Teachers and with Mohammad Na'amneh, a prominent lawyer from the Galilee, did not appear at that time.

We are publishing them in this issue.

Q: *Could you provide an analysis of the PLO, post-Beirut, inside and out of the occupied territoteis? Has the PLO shifted direction and, if so, why?*

Barghouti (West Bank): I think the PLO is trying to capitalise on the moral victory it achieved by its steadfastness and the world sympathy it generated for the Palestinian cause. Support has been given to the PLO from new circles in the world arena, especially France, Greece, other parts of Europe and even American public opinion.

Labadi (Jerusalem): After the departure from Beirut, the PLO became stronger and gained even greater support from the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Politically the PLO harvested more gains since the number of countries recognising the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people increased.

Due to the dispersal of PLO forces in various countries its efforts tend now to be more on the political front, but this does not mean that the PLO will put down its arms.

Na'amneh (Galilee):

The PLO's international reputation and prestige has increased four-fold as a result of their heroic steadfastness against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, contrary to the expectations of the Zionist leadership. But at the same time the PLO has been restricted, especially militarily because no Arab regime is going to allow it to carry out operations against Israel across their borders.

However, in my opinion, the presence of the PLO leadership and military forces in Syria — even if there are certain military and political restrictions — is better than going to any other Arab state. This is because the Syrian regime still opposes the solutions presented for the Palestinian cause such as Camp David, Reagan's initiative and the consequent European initiative. And there is an interim alliance between the Palestinian resistance and Syria.

Q: *What are your reactions to the Fez plan? Reagan plan?*

Barghouti: The fact that the Fez Summit passed such resolutions regarding the Palestinian question is a victory for the PLO. The royal majesties were not going to Fez in order to support such resolutions. They were for the Reagan plan but I think they were unable to endorse the plan at that time because of the influence of the PLO and some Arab countries.

The problem now is how to stick to these resolutions, not to have them erode from this victory. Anything less than these resolutions will mean capitulation. They are the minimum we can accept if we want to retain our right to self-determination and an independent Palestinian state.

We are facing many different attempts and pressures from some of the capitalists whoare linked to the United States: namely Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco. They are trying to influence the PLO to give a certain mandate to Jordan to represent the Palestinian people, the PLO, in negotiations with the American administration. I think to accept to relinquish the mandate given to the PLO to whatever party is harmful to the Palestinian cause. Because of the Jordanian regime's ties with imperialism they would just try to accomodate the American plans for the solution of the so-called Palestinian problem.

Q: *Do you see new relations developing between the PLO and the Jordanian regime? If so, what type? and why?*

Barghouti: The question is not whether to have contacts with Jordan, to coordinate— *but on what basis.* I am not against any contact, any coordination effort on the basis of respect for the Palestinian right to self-determination and independence. I don't think we have to accept any coordination *a priori.*

We have to attack the regime, we have to ask the regime, to try and embarrass the Jordanian regime, by putting forward what should be meant by recognition: if you really are our brothers, if you really are so anxious to help the Palestinian people and to restore the territory, then you have to accept the PLO, accept its forces in Jordan, give the PLO the right to free movement. The Palestinian population inside Jordan should be given free access to the PLO in Jordan.

I'm for coordination. If its anti-imperialist and revolutionary, I'm for it. If it is just traditional, to make things easy for the US to make concessions, then I'm against it.

Labadi: I don't see that there are new relations with Jordan. The Palestine National Council (PNC) decided in its previous sessions that the PLO should conduct dialogue with all the Arab countries, including Jordan. No new decision has been taken to change the relations already set up between the PLO and Jordan.

Na'amneh: We view the Jordanian regime as part of the enemy camp, a partner in the conspiracies.

How could there be cooperation and coordination between the PLO and this regime whose history is known and whose jails are still full of Palestinian fighters who were imprisoned for just participating in their legitimate right to fight to return to their homeland?

Q: *What are your specific reactions to (a) the Reagan plan? (b) the Fez plan?*

Labadi: The Reagan initiative is looked upon by the vast majority of the Palestinian population under occupation as a continuation of the same US policy regarding the Palestinian question — a new Camp David in a different form. As to the Fez Summit resolutions, they reflected the PLO's strength due to the heroic steadfastness it showed in Lebanon in facing the Israeli war machine. It is regretful that many of the summit participants are deviating from the resolutions, such as with King Hussein's attempts to circumvent the PLO. In general it looks like all Arab reactionary regimes and even the nationalist bourgeoisie are unable to execute the summit's decision.

Na'amneh: Although the Fez summit came as a result of the war in Lebanon, its decisions are positive and meet the requirements of an interim solution. But there is doubt whether the states which set out the plan are ready to implement them without retreat. To implement this plan, there should be economic, political and military backing — to utilise Arab energies towards this purpose. Also, I would say that the Fez plan is better than the (Saudi King) Fahd plan which doesn't mention the PLO and which suggests a basic concession to Israel by recognising it.

The Reagan plan is completely rejected. It doesn't reflect the minimal demands of the Palestinian people. There's no Palestinian state and no mention of the PLO. Some people say that there are positive points in the plan; for me, I take the plan as a whole. As a whole it runs completely counter to the basic aspirations of the Palestinians.

Q: *How do you see the idea of confederation?*

Barghouti: The philosophy behind the plan is to have unity between Jordan and Palestine in order to respond to the Reagan plan. Why didn't he put it forward before that? In 1972 he proposed it and it was refused and then he waited until now.

We had first of all the Reagan plan which says the area should be linked to Jordan, *then* we heard about the unity of Jordan and Palestine.

Labadi: The idea of federation or confederation with Jordan is a historical ambition and is forwarded by the Palestinian people but not before two conditions are met: (1) the setting up of an independent Palestinian state and (2) the establishment of a national democratic regime in Jordan.

Any attempt to make such a step nowadays does not serve the Palestinian cause.

Na'amneh: I am not against the unity between peoples but against unity with the Arab reactionary regimes. This would step up the suppression of the Arab masses by regimes. And since the Palestinian revolution is the spearhead of the Arab liberation movement it should back and coordinate with the revolutionary Arab forces and not with the suppressive regimes because this would be a betrayal of its objectives and principles.

Q: *Following Israel's banning of the National Guidance Committee and disbanding of municipalities, who from the occupied territories can speak on behalf of the Palestinians here?*

Na'amneh: Nobody other than the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is empowered to negotiate on the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

While at the same time, the strong relationship and contacts between the national institutions and personalities and leaders in the occupied territories and the PLO is very important, all have to be united in their aspirations and in deciding their future.

Barghouti: I think they have to let us communicate with them. This is their responsibility for those outside.

It could harm the PLO if a sizeable section of the population say that we are for Camp David agreements or for a solution which links us to Jordan. So the PLO should concentrate real efforts inside the occupied territories in order to strengthen its relations with the masses—not only political relations but also organisational.

I'm not for an independent leadership on the West Bank either.

The struggle now is who is going to gain the masses in the occupied territories? Because in their name, the Jordanians are trying to get something; in their name, the Egyptians are trying to get something. The Israelis are also trying to get some of the masses here through the Village Leagues and other collaborators.

Labadi: The relations between the PLO and West Bank leaders is that of a common interest and common aim. The Palestinian people, wherever they are, abide by the decisions of the PNC. As to the influence of the people in the occupied territories, it has always been and continues to be great. As proof of that, it has recently been recommended that the PNC delegates be increased by adding representatives from the occupied territories.

HOW THE 'JEWISH QUARTER' OF JERUSALEM'S OLD CITY EXPANDS

Muhammad Burkan and his 16-member family have owned their home in Sharaf quarter since 1947. The family bought their home, which they had previously rented from the Husseini family in 1947, and have British-issued documents proving their rights to the property. On the sixth day of the 1967 Six Day War, Israeli bulldozers moved in to begin clearing Arab houses from the Magharbeh — or so-called Jewish quarter — of which Sharaf was on the outskirts. The Burkan household survived the "renovation" until 1977 when attempts to keep the house were blocked by the Israeli High Court which refused to recognise the official deeds, choosing to accept a hearsay account that the house once belonged to Jews and was forcefully taken over by Arabs in the late-1930s.

If a solution is to be found to the problem of Jerusalem, most observers say that the Burkan case cannot be repeated. Security of property tenure must be extended to all owners, regardless of faith or origin. Delving into the morass of problems, however, ownership becomes less, rather than more, clear. What is obvious is that in the Old City, religious institutions have for centuries possessed the heartiest share of property — much of which is now rented or leased to private individuals.

The Greek Orthodox Church, the largest Christian property owner in the Old City, could not give information without the okay of the Greek patriarch who is now in Amman.

THE MAGHARBEH QUARTER

Since 1967 the Israeli Jewish Quarter Renovation Company also owns a large portion of land, obtained when the Israeli authorities expropriated the Magharbeh quarter and the area in front of the Western Wailing Wall. A report by the Secretary General of the United Nations, dated September 12, 1967, said that part of the quarter overlooking and facing the wall had been leveled and cleared. In the midst of these structures which belonged to the *waqf* and to Arab individuals, stood two mosques. Over 135 buildings housing more than 650 people were razed. This was done to provide a plaza for Jewish pilgrims to the wall.

Another type of residential expropriation took place in the remaining section of the Magharbeh quarter. According to Israeli official sources, some 3,500 Arabs were forcibly removed, and their homes replaced by dormitory facilities to house 2,500 Talmudic students.

The exact size and proportion of the newly-built Jewish quarter is hidden in most records and studies on property in the Old City. According to the official City Finance Office records, there are 2,279 structures which are privately or publicly owned. The study lists under "other ownership" 16 municipality structures and one corporation — but the sole corporation in the Old City which amounts to .05 percent of the commercial entities is in fact the Jewish Quarter Renovation Corporation which in fact, through expropriation, owns about one-sixth of the land.

The JQRC is responsible for the recent expulsion of many Palestinian residents. Among the latest incidents of forcible exile from the Old City:

* On March 4, 1980, Ayoub Tutunji and his family were kicked out of their home in the Ghozlan neighbourhood. Tutunji had been under pressure from the Jewish Quarter Renovation Corporation to move since 1972.

* On February 24, 1981 Bassem Da'as from the Aqbat Khadiyeh neighbourhood in the Old City was forced to leave after religious Jews took over his house and converted it to a yeshiva (religious school). Da'as persisted on staying with his family in one room until he was physically removed in mid-September 1981 by police who were acting on behalf of the renovation corporation.

* On July 23, 1981 the bakery owned by Muhammad Sawaf in the Jewish quarter was destroyed. The Sawaf family, consisting of 13 members, had been forced to leave their house in September 1972.

* Muhammad Burkan, who was evicted from his house in 1977, tried to buy his own house back when it was put up for sale by the "renovation corporation." The Corporation refused his application saying that applicants had to be new Jewish immigrants, serve in the Israeli army or be former members of Jewish underground organisations. Burkan, not qualifying, went to the High Court which ruled against his eligibility because he is "Muslim and holder of a Jordanian passport."

Waqf

The *waqf*, a religious charitable and organisational institute, supervises the construction of Islamic property such as mosques, schools, markets, fountains, wells, libraries and residential buildings. The *waqf* became institutionalised in the Holy Land after Salah al-Din liberated Palestine from the Crusaders in the 12th century. It was established for philanthropic purposes — generally religious or educational.

Two hundred years ago, under the Turks, the Sultan formed a central *waqf* headed by Rajab Pasha to re-establish and reorganise *waqf* property in various parts of the Arab world, to be overseen by the Islamic council.

There are three types of *waqf* property administration in the Old City: general *waqf* property over which the *waqf* have total authority (proceeds from it go to maintain mosques, charities etc.); *waqf hikri* which is *waqf* property rented to individuals or institutions, and *waqf dhurri*, property held by the *waqf* but all proceeds are distributed to the offspring of the family who put the property in trust.

Any building can be registered as *waqf dhurri*.

Most of the large property-owning families of Jerusalem hold property in the Old City in this way. Over time several families hold shares in the same building through inheritancy. So that, for instance, one member of the Fityani family holds 1/12th of Hammam al-Ain, a public bath in Jerusalem. In the case of *waqf dhurri*, owners of the building do not have the right to make changes in the building structure, while with *waqf hikri* the property managers have full rights to do whatever they wish. An information log including the name of the *waqf* area, its position, number of the property, type, name of the administrator and the amount of rent is kept at the *waqf* offices. In total the Islamic community owns 637 buildings — almost 30 percent of all institutional holdings in the Old City.

In 1948, the Israeli authorities confiscated 116 dunums of *waqf* land, including buildings in the Bab al Magharbeh and Sharaf quarters. This move and the Israeli disregard of religious property in general, has weakened the Islamic *waqf*'s position and spread doubt about the ability of the religious community to protect properties.

Selling Property

The sale of *waqf* property or even the sale of Islamic private property to non-Muslim individuals is prohibited by Islamic law which respects the saying of the Prophet Mohammed: "Any Muslim who sells the property of Islam to an infidel is considered to be outside Islam." Only since the occupation has *waqf* property been transferred — and that is forcible one-way traffic, from the Islamic authorities to the Israeli state or quasi-state bodies.

Armenians

Although the Armenian Church owns only a small percentage of property in Palestine, they hold a disproportionately large area within the Old City. One Armenian official estimated that the church owns one-sixth of the property in the Old City.

The Armenian patriarchate itself is the possessor of every single dunum of land belonging to Armenians in the Old City. There is no Armenian private property. The Armenian Convent consists of 75 percent of all Armenian property. Those who live in the Armenian Convent area are Armenians who immigrated from Turkey after the pogrom there in the early years of this century. These tenants are not obliged to pay rent or taxes. Tenants that live outside the Convent have to pay nominal rent to the Armenian church and the church pays taxes on the property it owns outside the convent.

Located in the south-west districts of the Old City, the Armenian quarter parallels the ever-expanding Jewish quarter. The Armenian community is worried that the next expansion will be into their homes.

GREEK PROPERTY

The Greek Orthodox community's property holdings in the Old City are mainly centered in *al-Nassara* quarter, the Christian quarter. The community consists of Greek nationals who work for the patriarchate and local Palestinian Arabs, whose families converted to the religion centuries before.

In 1914 during the Ottoman rule of the area, the Greek Orthodox church obtained a decree protecting all church property. During World War I and before being conscripted to war, Arabs belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church turned their property over to the church for trusteeship. The Church marked these sites with a capital "T" and a small circle on top to protect the building. In return the church provided housing for its parish and paid rent to families who were not living in their homes.

Exchange of homes within the parish has always been allowed but tenants who wanted to exchange with non-Greek Orthodox individuals have to go through the church which in turn draws up a contract with the non-Greek Orthodox party.

Al-Bireh Demonstrates

After Sabra and Shatila

As the women filed out of the cemetery after their traditional *Id* dawn visit to buried relatives — several have lost sons in the Lebanon war and visit them too, symbolically — they gathered in the street near the gate.

A circle opened in their midst, and seven *fellahat* stepped out to dance in that familiar lurching, yet graceful way. They sang plaintively, calling and answering:

Young men strewn
Broken guns;
My heart is heavy
Over Beirut

Little boys watched from the surrounding walls, young men began gathering on the fringes of the crowd of women. Long fronds of date palms and black banners appeared.

They wept and slowly moved under the early autumn sky. Through ancient narrow streets they wound. An old green truck stopped and the three men inside covered their faces and cried.

The older women kept urging the young men and boys to go home, fearing for them, until a young woman snapped, "We are slaughtered together, so let's walk together!" And as the procession flowed it pulled with it more and more young men, who followed the women. A few moved briskly around the crowd, their eyes darting.

Old Im Ahmad — originally from Hadatha — joined too. She twists a cloth between her hands above her head. She makes frightful screams and ambles among the women, dazed.

"There doesn't seem to be anyone at the police station."

But at the main circle, an army truck has just arrived and disgorges green soldiers who make ready their weapons. The crowd is loud now and, watching the soldiers' hands, swerves and presses close around the corner.

At the next corner a row of soldiers wait. Two of them push the first women back. A few are intimidated, others shout, "We are only expressing how we feel!" and then go forward.

The old women and young men are exuberant at their little victory over the row of anxious soldiers. They call and answer:

He who enters west Beirut
Doesn't leave but in a coffin

Listen, Sharon, this is our country,
We're not leaving

The soldiers follow and the women surround the young men in a protective circle.

At the old mosque and village spring, more jeeps and a water cannon wait. One lone jeep follows the procession back to the cemetery where it crumbles apart.

SINCE STABBING OF SETTLER:

Faradis in Nightmare

By Said al-Ghazaleh

Since July 4, when the Israeli authorities demolished a house belonging to Muhammad Ali Mubarak under a pretext that he was member of the PLO, Faradis, a small village near the Herodion mountain east of Bethlehem, has been, according to villagers themselves, in a permanant state of terror, submission, and intimidation.

Every male over 15 and under about 35 – 45 has been detained. On July 5, Teko'a settlers occupied 100 dunums belonging to residents of the village, all members of the Abu Muhamid tribe of Beduin. Settlers built wooden-shacks and tents in the area. At night families lock themselves in their homes while settlers roam among houses of the village shining flashlights through windows to terrorize people. During the day the settlers insult residents of the village and harass them at every opportunity, locals say.

This is the Israelis' revenge for the stabbing of the supervisor of an archaeological site in the village. Mohammad Ali Mubarak, from Faradis, Mahmoud Hasan Ali al-Karm and Rateb Suleiman Ahmad, high school students in Bethlehem, were arrested, July 3, and charged with the stabbing. None have been tried.

Faradis village is very small, only a few houses. Za'atara village borders Faradis from the north. The 500 inhabitants of the village depended on sheep herding and agriculture before settlement building started. They now have 4000 dunum in wheat left.

I reached the village through Beit Sahour. The top of Mount Herodion appears from the main road between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. It is an archaelogical site now. Residents of the village used to grow food on it. After 1967 the Department of Antiquities of the occupation authorities grabbed it and now tourists roam all over it. It was the settler-guard of the site, notorious for his anti-Arab sentiment, who was stabbed to death, July 3.

I asked a child for Mohammad Mubarak's family's new home. The child guided us to a house inside the village, 50 meters away from the main road. Mubarak has two wives and four children. One of his wives Fathieh Mohammad Khadr al-Anati spoke about the demolition of her house.

"It is the harvest of long painful years of work. My husband, a builder, built it three years ago, We lived in it before the floors were layed. Only this year the house was completed. Fathieh, a 25-year old brunette, spoke with a pained voice. "We have to leave this house after the feast (Id al-Fitr – this week) as its owners want to come back from Jordan. I do not know where we will live after that. Only a few weeks ago, our house was a reality and now it is rubble," she said.

The second wife Rasmieh Mohammad Faraj refused to comment: "I do not have anything new to add, the calamity overwhlems me completely."

We went toward the rubble of the house along the main road. We could see it from the window, piles of white stones, unusual these days when most build with concrete. The first wife with her four children accompanied us. The other wife refused to come. We approached the rubble cautiously because settlers moved among the shacks.

Fathieh pointed to a house near the rubble. "This house belongs to my brother-in-law but his family cannot live in it because of settler harassments." She pointed out a black spot in the land, "They burned 50 sacks of wheat one day after the demolition. We borrowed the price of a sack of wheat from people."

We did not take the risk of photographing the settlement too closely. It is 10 metres from Mubarak's home.

Near the rubble, sits a woman, surrounded by her children in the shade of a house. "There is no need to talk anymore. All our men were arrested. We are left alone to face them. What is the benefit of an article in a newspaper. Last week we sent two complaints to the military governer in Bethlehem to get the settlers off our land. The military governor replied, 'They will not harm you, they only harm terrorists.'" Fatme, the woman, has two brothers in jail.

"Mubarak is innocent. He was working in Jerusalem when the incident happened," she concluded.

Down the road, Haj Ali, a man of about 60, was lying in front of his shop. "Many journalists and photographers came and left; our status remained as it was. Now the settlers are surveying our whole area. They are planning to build another settlement beside Teko'a which was built five years ago. Now, they are using this pretext to build another settlement adjoining our village."

"Rateb Ahmad Habib my 19-year old son is still in jail and life does not have any taste," a man of 50 years interrupted. He invited us to drink coffee. We crossed the main road with him to his small, empty shop. As we sat there several women and children came in repeating in a cacophony traditional curses against occupation.

"Where is the *mukhtar*?" I asked.

"He is in jail. He is an old man. They did not respect his age," came the reply.

Haroun Abu Muhamid, the *mukhtar*, refused to establish a Village League. "They might want to put pressure on him. He is a respected *mukhtar*," the 50-year old man repeated.

"The other *mukhtar* of Za'atara came to our village July 4 wearing *dishdashas* (long traditional costumes) and carrying their *Uzis*," the man added.

Ain Sultan Still There

By Awad Abdel Fattah

Ain Sultan camp, just two kilometers north of Jericho, is apparently still a target for destruction by the Israeli occupation authorities. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, the camp, which houses today about 110 families (600 persons), was to be bulldozed in a night operation, but the plan was postponed following the massacres at Shatila and Sabra Palestinian camps.

This story was confirmed by the local refugees. They told *Al Fair* that just before the news about the massacre spread, Israeli units and trucks were seen at night around the camp.

The Camp

Ain Sultan is one of the largest camps in the West Bank. It extends over an area amounting to three square kilometers, and rests on a few bare hills. It spreads as far as the eye can see. The whole scene is covered with mud houses, most of which have been deserted since 1967.

Another Expulsion

In 1967 Ain Sultan camp made a strategic target by the Israelis. After several days of shelling about 90 percent of the camp population were forced out. The occupation authorities have not allowed them back. "In 1967 the Israelis had a clear plan, to wipe out this camp, one of the testimonies of their crime," said Abd al-Hadi Ajameyya, who has been working in the camp's UNRWA office since 1962. Abd al-Hadi, a resident in the camp who is originally from Mghales villages, near Ramleh, remembers the whole story.

During the 1967 war the Israeli forces shelled the camp leaving 30 dead and wounded. Then the Israelis positioned their artillery units just behind the camp and started bombarding Karameh Palestinian camp in Jordan, 14 kilometers to the east, he says.

At the same time, a strict month-long curfew was imposed on the camp, although no Jordanian military position existed in it. People could not get out of their homes to fetch water or food, he remembers. "Life became unbearable, and out of 400 families, only 500 remained in the camp," said Abd al-Hadi, who added that he believed that this is what was aimed by the intimidation process made by the Israelis at that time.

"The thousands of families who could not stand against the starvation and intimidation process under the curfew crossed the Jordan River and never came back," he said. The fact that the remaining families chose to stick to their homes in Ain Sultan and refused to emigrate a second time, was a "blow to the indirect expulsion policy" of the Israelis, he believes.

Toward the end of the month-long curfew the new military governor of Jericho went to the camp and summoned to his office representatives of the camp refugees. To their surprise, they were told by him to leave the camp within 24 hours. "Otherwise you will be herded out like sheep," Abd al-Hadi remembered him saying.

The order had a grave impact on the population and as a result 70 percent of them were intimidated and departed to the East Bank. The rest moved to neighbouring Aqbat Jaber camp.

Three months later, during which intensified pressures were exerted on Israel by UNRWA, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN to allow all refugees who were forced out of their camps to come back, only the families who moved to Aqbat Jaber, approximately 110, were allowed to return.

At the bridges, the Israelis blocked returning families and refused to allow in young men and women below 18 years, preventing the refugees from coming back," said one UNRWA official.

The Camp Today

One of the results of the forced drop of the camp population, from 20,000 to 600, is that services have been minimized. Out of four schools, which existed in the pre-1967 period, there is only one school left, which today provides education services to 600 girls and boys, most of whom come from neighbouring villages, such as Duyouk and Nuwe'meh villages, where there are no schools. Most of the teachers of this school come from different parts of the West Bank.

The 16 water-points decreased to five collection points, from which women carry the water on their heads to their houses.

None of the services, including medical clinics and mother and child care centers, have attained any financial aid from the Israelis. All are financed and operated by UNRWA. However, this doesn't mean that the camp population are satisfied with the existing services. They complain of not having running water inside the homes, electricity and paved roads. For example, they have been using gasoline lamps to light their houses for the past 34 years. An extension of the electricity network is underway. The project is sponsored by the Jerusalem Arab Electricity Company.

Determination To Stay

The Israeli plan to dismantle the camp has never left the minds of its population. They say they are determined to resist any plan which aims at wiping out the camps before a radical solution to the Palestinian cause. "Why do the Israelis insist on kicking us out of this camp and yet not allow us back to our original villages," asks one old man. He added that we "will resist this plan by all possible means." Others reflected the same feelings and stance.

Abd al-Hadi outlined the reasons behind the plan to dismantle the camp; to remove all the marks which testify to the crime which Israel committed in 1948; to encircle Jericho with Israeli settlements; the proximity to the East Bank in order to be a front lineand clearing the ground for annexing the West Bank; finally, the abundance of the water, which can be used for agriculture.

Abd al-Hadi also confirmed that he and others will not leave – at any price. "Even if they demolish the houses on our heads, we will not move out."

GEORGE HABASH, PFLP GENERAL SECRETARY:

No Special Relations With Jordanian Regime

In this extremely candid interview, George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, analyses the state of the Palestinian struggle after the exodus from Beirut. He also gives his assessment of various Arab regimes as the PLO reorganises for the next stage of the struggle.

The interview was conducted recently by Al Fajr publisher PAUL AJLOUNY, on a visit to the Middle East.

Q: What are your perceptions and predictions for the PLO's future after Beirut?

George Habash: First of all, I must confess that leaving Beirut has put us in a very new situation, which is both difficult and complicated. But I hope that the momentum of the battle of Beirut will enable us to find the proper answers for the complicated questions we are facing. This is what we are aiming and working for, because we believe that the battle of Beirut is a victory for us.

The reactionary Arab states are trying to convince the leadership of the PLO that the only way remaining open for us is the American way. For this reason our first task at the present time is to maintain Palestinian unity in spite of all these reactionary attempts. We must preserve Palestinian unity on a national basis, in accordance with the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council.

Of course, besides this, we are facing the problem of how to continue our military struggle against Zionism, for in spite of all our gains on the world level, Israel continues to this very day to say a total "no" to our national aims, a total "no" to a Palestinian state. I myself do not think we can attain our national aims — by this I mean the Palestinian state — without more military struggle.

Q: Since your interpretation is that we must fight the Zionist state, and that in order to reach the Zionist state, we have to get rid of the reactionary Arab regimes, which comes first, the chicken or the egg?

George Habash: Both. We Palestinians have to continue fighting, but we must know that our military struggle will not make a real change in the balance of forces unless our revolution is able to depend on a new Arab world. By this I mean progressive and patriotic Arab regimes that fully support our revolution and our military struggle. I hope we will reach this situation one day.

Q: You are in Syria, you are not free to criticize this regime, because you're living under it. . . . Palestinians living in Jordan are not free to react, etc . . . All are afraid of the shadow, ie, the Arab host government. Have you resolved this question? Does it have to be resolved? Or can you continue to work with these limitations?

George Habash: Regarding the first part of the question, we were always working in a difficult situation regarding the Arab world. I won't go back historically, but since 1965, since the beginning of the Revolution, we have been working in difficulties. That is why I think we will be able to work in spite of the new difficult situation. Liberating your country is a matter of struggle, it's not an easy job; we have to fight. Regarding our situation in Syria, of course, we do not expect to have the same situation as in Lebanon . . .

Q: Freedom of movement will not be the same?

George Habash: Of course, and the whole situation will not be the same, but do not forget that we have many things in common with the Syrian regime. It is against Camp David, against the unfair US imperialist solution of the Middle East crisis. I must take into consideration that this regime is against Camp David. This is the main point.

Q: You were jailed by this regime at one time?

George Habash: Yes.

Q: I saw you on TV with the President, do you see any contradictions there?

George Habash: When you deal with politics, things change. Actually, our relations with this regime started after we had taken a common stand regarding (now assassinated Egyptian President Anwar) Sadat's regime and Camp David, and after we found ourselves in the same position regarding the Zionist plan for Lebanon. These were the two major points that brought us to common ground.

Q: You would try to find the positive aspects of the regime and work with them, ignoring all the negative aspects?

George Habash: Exactly . . . Don't forget that we, as Palestinians, must see things from all aspects. Don't forget that there were Syrian soldiers, Syrian army, fighting side-by-side with us. It's not to our benefit to forget this. On the contrary, it's to the benefit of the Palestinian cause to stress this, and to widen the common ground between the Syrian regime and the Palestinian Revolution. That is why we are working at the present moment on a number of tasks, chiefly Palestinian unity and as task number two, strengthening relations with the Syrian regime — two main tasks.

Q: Would you focus on your second task at the expense of the first?

George Habash: We are trying our very best, and we will succeed one day, to keep these two tasks from being contradictory. Why should they be in contradiction? If we take what happened in Lebanon, Zionist policy and aims, and if we think scientifically, they should not be in contradiction.

Q: I ask because (PLO Chairman Yasir) Arafat was in Jordan, and Jordan oppressed the Palestinians. Do you see any contradiction with Arafat meeting the king vs. these two elements — Palestinian unity and working with, in this case, the Jordanian regime?

George Habash: Again I stress, we are working for the best relations with comrade Arafat, and for the optimal level of Palestinian unity. But at the same time, we are totally, and I stress totally, against any special relations with the Jordanian regime. We know the Jordanian regime very, very well — from 1952 until 1982, and especially in September 1970.

Q: The Syrians crushed the Palestinians in the civil war in Lebanon. One case might be more extreme than the other...

George Habash: Much More!

Q: But they both fall within the same confines. You oppose special relations with Jordan; are you against special relations with Syria?

George Habash: There is a big difference. (US President Ronald) Reagan's plan aims at finding a solution for the Palestinian question through the Jordanian regime. Any special relations between the PLO and the Jordanian regime will enable Reagan to say to Saudi Arabia and other reactionary Arab powers: All right, I have taken into consideration what you want regarding the PLO. There is no such plan regarding Syria.

Q: There's a movement afoot for establishing a Palestinian entity in the areas that were controlled by Jordan and Egypt. Are you in favor of such an endeavor? If not, what mode of action would you pursue?

George Habash: There is a big difference between such vague words as "Palestinian entity," etc., etc., and saying: a fully independent Palestinian state. We are a full-fledged nation. We have the full right to be independent in a full-fledged state. Let the world and your readers know this very well. We are not after "autonomy," a Palestinian "entity," or any such vague notion. We leave these terms to Reagan. We are after a Palestinian state. The battles in Beirut proved that we have the right to regard ourselves as a full-fledged nation.

Q: Does this mean a full Palestinian state in all of Palestine?

George Habash: At the present time, the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council emphasize an independent Palestinian state on the area that we can liberate, that we can seize from the hands of Zionism.

Q: You are in favor of that?

George Habash: Yes, as a part of the PLO, and in accordance with the decisions of the Palestinian National Council, we are at present fighting for a fully independent Palestinian state on any part of Palestine that is liberated. But as long as Zionism continues, it's hard to envision a lasting peace. Zionism means occupation and colonization of Palestinian and Arab land; it means oppression against our people. This summer's invasion of Lebanon is the most recent affirmation of Zionist aggression and expansion. As long as these injustices prevail, it is natural for our people to continue resisting, to continue struggling for comprehensive freedom.

When I speak of Zionism, I'm not talking about Jews, because what happened inside Palestine during our battles in Beirut made a clear distinction between Judaism and Zionism. There were democratic Jews with us, while Zionism was against us. We will have no problem living with the Jews in Palestine. We will know the democratic way to organize ourselves. There will be no problem after we get rid of Zionism.

Q: Obviously you did not heed (Libyan leader Muammar) Qaddafi's advice (about committing suicide in Beirut). What did you think of his statement, and what was your reply?

George Habash: To be frank, we must take into consideration that Qaddafi was addressing us because he really wanted us to fight our best. Personally, I did not misunderstand his purposes. He is national, pro-Palestinian. He wants total victory for the Palestinian cause. I take these points into consideration, when you ask me to evaluate what he said.

I must also say that the people who were living the battle of Beirut know very well that the PLO leadership and all our fighters did their very best. Also, the way the people of Lebanon said good-by to us showed how well we fought. The way we were received here in Syria, in Democratic Yemen, in all the Arab world, shows that the Arab people know that the Palestinians, the PLO, the leadership and the fighters — did their best.

Q: You would accept his statement in view of your understanding of the man, not on the words themselves?

George Habash: Exactly.

Q: Do you think the Arab regimes would allow a democratic Palestinian state to be established?

George Habash: Before talking about the type of state, one must take into consideration that many Arab states are against a Palestinian state, period. Even if it were to be a dictatorship, they are opposed. Reagan has said this many times and it was not denied. Even before Reagan, (ex-US President Jimmy) Carter said that he had often met with Arab leaders and nobody spoke with him about a Palestinian state. Not only this, in a recent press conference Reagan said that Israel and the other neighboring states are afraid of such a state. So it's very natural for these regimes to be against a truly democratic Palestinian state. However, it's not a matter of whether they like it or not. It's a matter of the aims we are fighting for and our actual ability to achieve these aims.

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I would like to conclude with a salute to our people in occupied Palestine.